

State of the Union Address. While the President tried to put a positive spin on things, the truth of the matter is the United States is not thriving under Democratic control.

On the economic front, of course, Americans are struggling under the burden of the worst inflation in 40 years. There are Americans raising families today who had not yet been born the last time inflation was this bad.

Under Democratic control, Americans have seen their standard of living decline as they face massive increases in the price of basic necessities from groceries to gas. Inflation is so bad that despite wage increases in 2021, Americans saw a de facto pay cut. After months of ignoring soaring inflation numbers, the President and congressional Democrats have at last been forced to start talking about inflation.

Unfortunately, it has become clear they still don't understand why this inflation disaster happened and how their massive government spending spree—the so-called American Rescue Plan Act—helped create this crisis. “The American Rescue Plan helped working people—and left no one behind,” the President said in his speech last night. “It worked.” “It worked,” he said. If President Biden believes that, I have some oceanfront property in South Dakota to sell him.

The truth of the matter is that working Americans are struggling right now in large part due to the American Rescue Plan. The American Rescue Plan Act was not a targeted COVID relief bill. It was a massive, unnecessary spending spree that sent too much government money into the economy, and, predictably, the economy overheated as a result.

I am glad that Democrats are starting to acknowledge our inflation crisis, but it would be nice to see them recognize how it actually came about and commit to not repeating their mistakes in the future.

Inflation is not the only domestic crisis that we have been facing on Democrats' watch. Our Nation is also experiencing a border crisis that has resulted in a security, enforcement, and humanitarian nightmare. Almost from the day the President took office, we have seen a massive surge in attempted illegal immigration across our southern border, and there is no end in sight.

In January, the Border Patrol encountered more than 150,000 individuals illegally trying to cross our southern border, the highest January number in more than 20 years. These numbers, of course, only reflect individuals the Border Patrol has been able to apprehend. A Department of Homeland Security official recently stated that more than 200,000 individuals have successfully evaded apprehension since October and have disappeared—disappeared—into our country, more than 200,000 individuals. It is not surprising. The Border Patrol is stretched thin and

lacks sufficient resources to deal with this never-ending border surge. But it is deeply concerning. There are 200,000 people entering our country without any security check or vetting, raising the risk of drug traffickers, criminals, or even terrorists finding their way into our communities.

But perhaps the most concerning thing is that a full year after this massive surge began, the President generally continues to act as if this border crisis doesn't exist. He is apparently unaware of or can't be bothered to deal with the real security risk that this represents for our country.

The President did allude to securing the border last night—something he does periodically—but given his track record, I am not holding my breath. In fact, he hasn't even visited it nor has the Vice President, for that matter.

When it comes to the world stage, things are a little better. The President's first year in office was distinguished by his disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan, which weakened our national security, diminished our standing with our allies, and resulted in our abandoning thousands of Afghans who had worked with us and whom we had promised to protect.

Currently, we are facing another international crisis—Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. While this is a crisis of Vladimir Putin's making, President Biden was slow to move weapons and resisted imposing sanctions before Russia attacked. I hope that in the days to come, the President will stand strong against Russian aggression and not hesitate to impose any additional sanctions that may be necessary to isolate Putin and his cronies and to halt the Russian advance.

As I said, the United States is not thriving under Democratic control. A big reason for that is because the President and congressional Democrats have had one thing on their minds since taking office and that is implementing a wide-ranging, far-left socialist agenda.

Democrats' lack of leadership on the big issues facing our country and our world has been striking. I think the truth is that Democrats have seen those big issues as distractions from their real goal in taking office, and that is implementing that far-left agenda. While inflation spiked and then spiked again, Democrats were AWOL. They were focused on passing a massive tax-and-spending spree that would unquestionably make our inflation problem even worse.

And when that failed, they turned their focus to a Federal takeover of election law that they hoped would give them an advantage in the November elections.

This week, as Vladimir Putin continued to pursue his apparent dream of reconstituting the Soviet Union by pushing further into Ukraine, Democrats took a vote on, of all things, legislation to remove virtually all State-level restrictions on abortion.

Yes, that was the big vote this week—legislation to remove nearly every State-level restriction on abortion, despite the fact, I might add, that the majority of the American people support restrictions on abortion. But that doesn't matter to Democrats. If the Planned Parenthood wing of the party wants a vote on unrestricted abortion on demand, that is what it gets.

In yet another example of just how far the Democratic Party has run to the left and just how disconnected Democrats have become, last week, John Kerry, who serves as President Biden's climate chief, expressed his hope that war with Ukraine would be averted because of the carbon emissions such a war would create and how the war might distract from climate change.

You can't make it up. At the time of his remarks, Russia was on the verge of invading a sovereign nation—and possibly condemning an entire country to Soviet oppression—and a key member of the President's administration was worried about how the war might distract from climate change.

I am a longtime supporter of clean energy, but we have a big problem when members of our country's leadership are looking at the imperialist takeover of a sovereign nation, and their biggest concern is not human life and human freedom but carbon emissions.

But it is another sign of just how ideological the Democratic Party has become. Nothing—nothing—is allowed to come between the Democratic Party and its far-left agenda.

President Biden made some nods toward bipartisanship last night, but it remains to be seen whether Democrats and the President are capable of setting aside their far-left agenda to address the priorities facing this country. And given some of the measures the President proposed last night, I have my doubts.

But I hope—I hope for the sake of our Nation—the Democrats will rethink their evermore rigid allegiance to the far left and instead work with Republicans in a bipartisan fashion.

The American people deserve better than what Democrats have given them over this past year.

I yield the floor.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES RELATING TO “MEDICARE AND MEDICAID PROGRAMS; OMNIBUS COVID-19 HEALTH CARE STAFF VACCINATION”

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to consideration of S.J. Res. 32, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services relating to "Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 p.m. is equally divided between the leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, as I speak here today on the U.S. Postal Service Reform Act, Russian President Vladimir Putin is waging a cruel, unjust, and barbaric war of choice, financed by a global addiction to fossil fuels, an addiction which Russia is only too happy to exploit right now.

And the most effective way to reduce the long-term security threat to Ukraine and Europe and the United States and the whole world is to say that we are going to empty Vladimir Putin's oil-and-gas-funded piggy bank, setting ourselves and our allies on the course to a future powered by domestic clean energy.

We can use the power of our Federal Government to not only apply sanctions but also destroy Putin's dirty energy business model.

The U.S. Government has 700,000 vehicles in its fleet, and 160,000 of the U.S. Government's vehicles belong to the U.S. Postal Service. Our Postal Service could play an important role in destroying the Putin business model by committing to clean instead of dirty energy to fuel its fleet. And it should start by reversing Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's short-term decision to buy dirty, new postal trucks, energy-inefficient postal trucks, gas-guzzling postal trucks.

As we import oil from Russia, we don't need a new fleet of gas-guzzling postal vehicles in the United States because if we don't get a truly next-generation electric fleet of postal trucks, we need the next generation of Postal Service leadership delivered express to the American people.

This is just the latest stop in DeJoy's disastrous postal route, and it is time for him to resign. This is just a leftover agenda from the Trump years, this commitment to inefficiency, to the consumption unnecessarily of oil and natural gas in our country.

The Postal Service Board of Governors and the Biden administration just can't let this bad business, bad-for-climate, bad-for-health decision stand. If DeJoy won't get rid of this decision, the U.S. Postal Service should get rid of him, especially at this moment where Russia is fueling an unconscionable invasion of Ukraine with oil money from the United States.

It is the American people who have been paying \$20 billion a year for Russian oil coming into our country to put in the gasoline tanks of the United States. And then he takes that money

and uses it to buy tanks and planes and weapons to invade the Ukraine.

A new fleet of electric postal trucks would receive a stamp of approval from the American people as it would lower costs, reduce pollution, and provide public health benefits while backing out the Russian oil that comes into our country every single day.

Louis DeJoy wants to claim he doesn't have the money to go electric, but that false statement should be marked "return to sender."

One study found that full electrification would save the U.S. Postal Service \$4.3 billion over the lifetime of the fleet. In other words, going all electric saves money for the American taxpayer because going all electric is cheaper than going all gasoline or all diesel. We just save money, but we don't have to send any money to Putin to run our Postal Service because that just doesn't make any sense in 2022.

Since taking office in 2020, Louis DeJoy has tried to pinch pennies at the U.S. Postal Service, so why is he now proposing a fiscally irresponsible plan that leaves \$4.3 billion on the table instead of in U.S. Postal Service's budget?

If our new postal fleet is made up of vehicles that get less than 10 miles to the gallon, no better than the vehicles already in use, we are going to be tying our mail delivery system of the future to the dirty oil, inefficient oil, inefficient vehicle strategy of the past.

We shouldn't be proposing the Postal Service use the same energy from the time of the Pony Express, and these vehicles that we are using today move at about the same speed as the Pony Express.

It is time for us to just think smarter and not harder. That is all electric. That is backing out oil. That is just saying that we can have an infinity sign next to the efficiency of these vehicles which we are driving and not this 10-mile-a-gallon, 1930s, 1920s view of how efficient the postal vehicles in our country should be.

So this is simple. Electric postal trucks are cheaper. Electric postal trucks are cleaner. And this isn't charity; it is business. And you don't have to take my word for it. Ask some of our most successful companies in the mail delivery industry.

These are the competitors to the Postal Service. The Postal Service is constantly coming up here saying that we need more subsidies; we need more help to compete against these private-sector competitors. Well, UPS just placed a 10,000-vehicle purchase order for electric trucks. FedEx is moving to achieve a fully electric fleet by the year 2040. And Amazon is purchasing 100,000 new electric delivery vehicles; that is 20 times more than our U.S. Postal Service is planning to get under Louis DeJoy.

These trucks also would work for UPS routes today. Ninety-six percent of USPS routes are compatible with electric postal routes. Electric vehicles

aren't the future; they work for us, for our budgets, and for our energy security right now.

We need to protect our planet, and having all electric vehicles just dramatically reduces the greenhouse gases that we emit. But we also have to protect our national security. We have to be telling Russia that we don't need your oil any more than we need your caviar.

And the only way to do it, ultimately, is for the United States—you just find a way to break our addiction. And the way to break our addiction is to just move to the kinds of transportation, automotive, U.S. Postal Service vehicles that don't need oil and still get you just where you want to go.

So that is our challenge right now. And we need to protect everything—everything—our health, our environment, our economy, our national security, and our own morality by ensuring that we move in this direction.

And we need to protect our planet and our Postal Service by putting a "Forever Stamp" on our transportation future, a fleet of battery-operated electric vehicles that will usher in a clean vehicle revolution in America and destroy the demand for oil and gas so that the business model of Russia is destroyed.

This is the weapon that we can be using. This is the message we should be sending to the rest of the world. So I urge the White House, the U.S. Postal Service, and the Congress to take any and all possible steps to right this wrong decision from Louis DeJoy. The U.S. Postal Service needs to tear up this deal and buy a clean fleet, and if it doesn't, it needs to get a clean start without Louis DeJoy, who is looking at the world in a rearview mirror.

You have to look straight ahead to this all-electric vehicle future. Let's ensure that the Postal Service's next-generation delivery vehicles create a livable world for the next generation, not only of America but as a model for what the rest of the world has to do.

What I hear from my Republican friends, what I hear from the American petroleum industry is, well, the Biden administration should just open up more leases to drill for oil, open up more leases immediately for more drilling.

Well, here is the problem with the Republican Party; here is the problem with the American Petroleum Institute: The oil industry, the oil giants, have hoarded thousands and thousands of leases on public lands all across the United States, and they have not drilled on them.

I have introduced legislation for years saying: Use it or lose it. You want the lease? You say it is imperative? You are going to pay for that lease and then you don't drill on it?

Do you know what they are doing? They just hoard all of that land, and the land is the size of huge States in our country. That is how much land they have right now or that is owned

by the American people and leased to the oil companies.

So they want to start drilling? Why did you bid for all those leases in the years gone by? Do you want to know why? They want to use this whole Russia situation as an opportunity to get even more leases that they won't drill on and to get them cheap and to create a false sense of emergency here, when, if they want to drill, they have already got all of the leases they would ever need. They have a backlog of 20 years they haven't even started on.

So when you hear these crocodile tears from the American petroleum industry, from the American prevarication industry, that is what it is all about. If they wanted to drill, they would be drilling right now—onshore, offshore. They have the leases. All they want to do is just get more and more and more and cheaper and cheaper and cheaper from the American people, while fighting to stop an all-electric vehicle revolution, stop a wind and solar revolution in our country. That is what their agenda is. That is what the American Petroleum Institute is all about—it is stopping an all-electric revolution; it is stopping a wind and solar revolution; it is stopping a battery revolution—because it destroys their business model as well, while hoarding leases, not drilling on them, and then coming in here hat in hand, demanding, in a lot of ways, that we give them even more leases that they are not going to drill on. They are just going to hoard it and save it for years, decades, generations to come. It is sad. It is a sad commentary on American corporate greed, but that is where we stand right now.

So just be prepared to hear more lies from the American oil industry, lies that go right to the heart of what we really have to do as Americans for the next generation, and that is to stand up to those oil companies, stand up to the Russian oil oligarchs, and say: We are moving away from you historically. That is what young people in our country want. They want us to unleash our technological innovation genius in order to solve this problem, and it is wind, it is solar and all-electric vehicles and battery storage technologies. And it is a moral challenge for us. It is a national security challenge for us. It is an environmental challenge for us. It is an economic challenge for us.

We can already see the impact this oil control of the global economy has upon ordinary consumers in America and the rest of the world. Inflation is spiking—oil. Russia is invading Ukraine—oil. A new U.N. report says that we now have an evermore dangerous warming of our planet—oil. And what did they do? They continued to lie. They continued to try to control our agenda so that we cannot pass the legislation to unleash our technological genius. That is our greatest strength. Their greatest strengths are their natural resources, but ultimately, our greatest renewable re-

sources are the brains of the American people, especially the younger people, because if they were unleashed to invent and deploy all of these new technologies, it would revolutionize not just our country but revolutionize the whole rest of the world.

We gave the young people in our country in the 1990s and the early 2000s a chance to do that with our telecommunications system. It is now called the internet. It is called broadband. Young people did that. We have to give the same opportunity to young people to do the same thing so that we back out the oil, we revolutionize the way in which we transport ourselves, and we give hope to the rest of the planet that the United States is going to use all of its resources to accomplish that goal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last night, of course, we all listened to President Biden's prime-time opportunity to explain what his administration is doing to address the many challenges that our Nation is facing.

Here at home, we know family budgets are being plundered by the worst inflation in four decades. We are paying higher prices for everything from food to gasoline. We also know that there have been spikes in violent crime that have created public safety concerns in communities across the country. After a year of hearing folks on the Democratic side of the aisle, the progressive base of the Democratic Party, calling for defunding the police, it was welcome to hear the President say last night that we should fund the police. It is long overdue.

Of course, there is the humanitarian crisis at the southern border. As I have said before, Texas has 1,200 miles of common border with Mexico, and, of course, we have seen records shattered month after month of people coming across the border, claiming asylum, and then being placed by U.S. authorities into the interior of the United States, given a notice to appear for a future court hearing, which, in all likelihood, will never occur.

The human smugglers and drug cartels have figured out the weaknesses in our own laws and policies, and they are exploiting them, to the detriment of the American people.

On drugs alone, 100,000 Americans died of drug overdoses last year, the overwhelming amount of which those drugs came across the southern border into the United States. And the cartels are smart. They figured out that if you flood the border with people, that is going to take the Border Patrol off the frontlines, and here come the drug cartels moving their poison across the border.

Of course, the trials we are facing now abroad are not any easier. The precipitous withdrawal from Afghanistan without any kind of warning or con-

sultation with our NATO allies has caused the world to doubt the future of American leadership, and then the Chinese Communist Party over in the People's Republic of China continues to commit genocide against the Uighurs and threaten attacks against a democratic Taiwan.

Of course, very much on our minds today is the fact that Vladimir Putin is attempting to seize a sovereign nation and redraw the maps of Europe and testing the resolve of the United States and other democracies around the world.

I, of course, like many, attended the President's address last night and listened closely as he spoke about each of these challenges, beginning with the conflict—or I should say war—in Ukraine.

When it comes to Russia, our allies are not strong enough on their own to deter Vladimir Putin or the Russian Federation. They are looking to the United States as part of NATO—the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—for leadership.

I was pleased to hear President Biden deliver a clear message to the world that we stand with the democracy in Ukraine and we will do everything we can to help the Ukrainians deter Putin and to defend their country. The President said we will continue to send military, economic, and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, and it is clear that there is bipartisan support for that. But the fact of the matter is, most of our allies in Europe have been the ones who stepped up to the threat—of course, it is in their neighborhood—and we could have but did not impose sanctions before Putin invaded rather than after the fact.

I was disappointed that the President did not speak about what is at stake in Ukraine. It is something I talked about here on the floor a few weeks back.

With so many challenges in our own backyard, it is easy for folks in Texas or Colorado or New Jersey or anywhere else around the country to wonder, why should I care about what is happening in Ukraine?

Americans want to know, what difference does a war or a military conflict on the other side of the globe—what relevance does it have to me, and if it is important, how can we best help?

Well, we know the answer to that question here in the House and the Senate. We know that this conflict is key to preserving our rules-based international order, that if Putin can get away with this, he can get away with anything. If Putin gets away with this, President Xi is waiting for his opportunity to unify Taiwan with mainland China. So this is a global geopolitical crisis. We know China and Iran, as I mentioned, and other adversaries are paying close attention.

If Texans want America to stay out of another world war, then we better slam the door on Vladimir Putin now.

President Biden had a window to remind the American people and our allies around the world what is at stake in this conflict. Vladimir Putin has even put his nuclear forces on active reserve. He is rattling the nuclear sabre in order to threaten and intimidate NATO and the United States and the rest of the world, but he is also finding an incredible amount of courage and resilience and leadership by people like President Zelenskyy in leading the courageous Ukrainian people in their effort to resist this invasion.

So this is a very serious and very dangerous moment. Many of the things that Vladimir Putin has done are eerily similar to what happened in Nazi Germany in the late 1930s and 1940s.

On another topic, the President alluded to inflation last night, but he didn't instill much confidence that he had a concept of what was at stake or how to solve the problem. When he talked about his plan to address inflation, he said we need to cut our expenses and overhead. Well, I talked to some of the cotton producers in Texas last week when I was home, and they told me that one of the biggest problems they have are the increasing costs of their inputs, things like diesel and energy, fertilizer, and the like. They don't have any room to cut their overhead unless they go out of business entirely.

So the President did not inspire much confidence when it came to dealing with the scourge of inflation. But one thing we can do is quit making it worse by trying to continue to shovel more and more money out the door, chasing fewer and fewer goods and services.

The President did try to recycle some of the elements of the Build Back Better—or, as I like to call it, the “Build Back Broke”—bill, but that bill, that policy is dead and buried. The President couldn't even get support among his own political party. But he did try to rebrand it and respond to it in a way—rebrand it in a way that appeared to deal with the concerns that everybody has about increasing costs and inflation, but it just did not make any sense.

The President repeated the same line that has already been shot down a number of times. He talked about raising taxes on the American people, and he says no one earning \$400,000 a year or less would pay a penny more under his plan. But, of course, this is the same President who said that the price of the \$5 trillion Build Back Better bill was zero. I think the President has lost a lot of credibility when it comes to talking about taxes and spending.

Well, what the President talked about last night was really a laundry list of his liberal agenda. This isn't a new plan. This is the same old plan with a new name broken down into smaller pieces. None of this is going to address what is confronting the American people today when it comes to in-

flation or crime or the border or regaining America's leadership and credibility in world affairs.

While I mention crime, when it comes to crime, the President did affirm that defunding the police is not the answer.

I see our friend, the Senator from New Jersey, on the floor of the Senate. I think he led an effort for us to have a vote on funding the police rather than defunding the police.

Of course, this is a complete reversal from what we have heard from many of the President's nominees, including those at the Department of Justice—people like Vanita Gupta who for months, if not years, chanted this mantra of defunding the police and criticizing the men and women in law enforcement who are the thin blue line between us and chaos. But there are some shining examples that I think the President could have pointed to. One is Dallas, TX. It is a shining example of how supporting our police both financially and with moral support and with smart plans can make a difference.

In most major cities across the country today, crime is up in all categories. In Dallas, TX, violent crime is down by 8.5 percent, and that is no accident. It is thanks to the great leadership of Dallas's mayor Eric Johnson and Chief Garcia, chief of the Dallas Police Department.

I asked Chief Garcia yesterday in a hearing in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I said: Is there any reason, Chief Garcia, that the plan you implemented in Dallas couldn't work elsewhere around the country? And he said: No, there is no reason.

Of course, every plan needs to be adapted to local conditions; but what the Dallas Police Department and the city council and mayor have done is something that can be replicated in other parts of the country.

Chief Garcia and other witnesses also testified to the importance of Project Safe Neighborhoods, which is a Federal program designed to go after gun criminals, particularly people who are felons in possession or people who use firearms for carjacking, drug transactions, and the like.

The fact of the matter is that Federal law with its mandatory minimum sentences for using a firearm illegally in violation of Federal law is a huge deterrent. And if you can't deter people from using firearms, you certainly can lock them up for an extended period of time which, I think, sends a strong message that this sort of activity will not be tolerated and will deter future criminal activity.

So there is a lot we can do when it comes to crime. We can also make sure that people who are suffering from mental health challenges aren't diverted to jails and denied the treatment that they need that can help them on the road to recovery. Those are the kinds of things that I wish we could have heard more about from the President last night.

I was shocked when the President said we need immigration reform last night. I have been in the Senate for quite a while now, a member of the Judiciary Committee. I am the ranking member on the Immigration Subcommittee. When my party has been in the majority, I have been the chairman of the Immigration Subcommittee. For the President to say immigration reform is something we ought to do struck me as a throwaway line. And the reason I say that is because he has done nothing, zero, zip, nada, to stop the flood of migrants across our southern border, together with the illegal drugs that come right behind them.

I have tried to do my best on a bipartisan basis working with people like Ms. SINEMA, a border State Senator from Arizona, to come up with some modest suggestions for the administration to deal with the crisis at our border. Unfortunately, we have not heard a peep out of the administration, at the same time that the President's poll numbers, when it comes to border security and immigration, are in the cellar. You would think that they would be looking for some sort of bipartisan opportunity to register a win and make some progress, but that would be wrong.

Well, I was hopeful that we would hear more about the President's plan to work with Republicans in a 50-50 Senate to build consensus for bipartisan solutions. Other than the bipartisan support for Ukraine, we didn't hear much about that last night. What we heard was a long laundry list of partisan legislation that has been tried and failed during this last year.

The Biden administration needs to do more to address inflation in a smart way—in an effective way. They need to do more to support our men and women in uniform who are the thin blue line between us and criminals; and they need to do something—anything—to address the humanitarian crisis at the southern border.

I was hoping this could be a reset moment. You know, we all make mistakes in life, but the real test is whether we learn from those mistakes. But from the comments that the President made last night when it comes to these failed policies, it appears that he has learned nothing.

The American people elected a 50-50 Senate expecting to force us to work together, and we should do that. We should put the tried-and-true formula of building consensus and passing positive legislation to help the American people. We should use that formula again. It just simply blows my mind that the President and his party, with the prospect of an evenly divided Congress, has tried to do so many things on a purely partisan basis, and, as you might expect, has failed to do so when he has been unable to unite even his own political party.

Well, we need a stronger and a safer and a more prosperous country. As Governor Kim Reynolds said yesterday

evening, we can't project strength abroad if we are weak at home. And we can't support our allies, NATO, and our own military to deter authoritarian thugs like Putin if our economy isn't strong here at home as well.

So I continue to be an optimist and hope for the best, but last night's message was not encouraging.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1216

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to ask a unanimous consent request, and I am going to state the reasons for that before I ask for the request. And I appreciate my friend from New Jersey coming over to help me at this particular time.

So, today, the issue is fentanyl. Today's vote on this bill, as amended, should be a yes for every Member of the Senate. This measure extends the lifesaving authority placing fentanyl drugs in schedule I. In fact, a 15-month extension of this authority similar to the bill that I offer right now passed the Senate, and it passed the Senate unanimously in 2020.

In case that you have not read the headlines for the past few years, fentanyl and its analogs are killing tens of thousands of Americans each year, and it happens that fentanyl and analogs are now the No. 1 cause of death for Americans ages 18 to 45, the most productive years of a person's life.

The Drug Enforcement Administration placed fentanyl and analogs on schedule I in the year 2018. Congress has already extended this authority like I am seeking today five times in 4 years. Now, we are on the verge of extending it for a sixth time before it expires on March 11.

During the Biden administration, these reauthorizations have gotten shorter and yet shorter. The periods of extension have been as short as just a few weeks. This has created constant doubt about whether fentanyl scheduling will even continue.

I have received calls from families of people who have overdosed on fentanyl. I have received calls from law enforcement seeking our help for them to enforce the law. For the last 10 months, these families and these law enforcement people have been in terror that this authority will disappear, that thousands then would die from the fentanyl overdoses.

We have extended fentanyl scheduling five times in 4 years, but four have been in the last 10 months alone. While extensions preserve a lifesaving authority, this kind of legislation by extension is neither sustainable nor reflective of the great gravity of keeping fentanyl drugs in schedule I. A permanently scheduled solution is the best answer; but, unfortunately, a permanent scheduling action isn't feasible right now.

Now, why would that be the case? Because some members of Congress don't

support keeping fentanyl analogs in schedule I—or maybe at all. Some reject our criminal drug laws altogether. That seems unbelievable, but that is what I sense from some of my colleagues. Fortunately, this is a fringe opinion and not very representative of the majority of Congress. Republicans and Democrats alike have voiced support for permanently scheduling fentanyl analogs, including even President Biden. But until Congress agrees on a bipartisan and a permanent solution, we must maintain the authority by extension.

For years, I have been leading the fight to extend this authority in hopes of finding a permanent solution. I have urged Leader SCHUMER to support measures that extend fentanyl scheduling as long as possible. I have asked President Biden to engage with bipartisan congressional leaders on a permanent solution. And I have requested that Chairman DURBIN hold a hearing on this issue in the Judiciary Committee. All these requests have obviously gone unanswered and ignored, or I wouldn't be here today asking for unanimous consent.

Scheduling fentanyl analogs matters. And why does it matter? It can save lives. Congress has the power. Congress has the responsibility to act. So we ought to do that in just a few minutes. But we can't make meaningful bipartisan change unless we have enough time to do it.

So let's pass a long-term extension and finally then lead the way to a permanent solution.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent request that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 45, S. 1216; further, that the Grassley amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mr. BOOKER. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I have to preface my remarks with my deep respect for the senior Senator from Iowa. I respect him not just because he slays it on Twitter, but I respect him because of his heart, because we have a great working relationship, and because we have worked together to deal with the drug crisis in America. We have worked together to make the judicial system more just.

What you hear from the senior Senator is passion that comes from the crisis, as he said. I have traveled his State considerably, and the opioid crisis is a crisis from New Jersey to Iowa—all over our country. He read the statistics, but you could hear from his heart that these are families he knows; that these are people who have seen the tre-

mendous loss of young people through opioid overdoses.

We cannot in this country tolerate one more overdose. I agree with the Senator's sense of urgency in that we cannot tolerate one more death and that we have to address this public health crisis. But with this goal in mind, I cannot support the bill as it is offered today because extending the temporary scheduling of fentanyl analogs alone is a failed experiment.

We have seen this temporary scheduling. We are in it right now. Classwide scheduling has not curbed the overdoses. In fact, overdoses have increased during the period that fentanyl analogs have been scheduled by nearly 40 percent from June 2019 to May 2020.

Here is what makes it even worse.

As a result of just blanket classwide scheduling—this broad sweep approach—the FDA recently testified that there is a potential lifesaving antidote to these fentanyl analogs. It is basically a stronger version of naloxone. That stronger version has been placed, because of this blanket scheduling, as a schedule I. The FDA knows that this could actually endanger more people.

Why in the midst of a public health crisis are we criminalizing the next naloxone instead of rushing it to the hands of researchers for study and evaluation?

When you put something in schedule I, it is a declaration that doesn't even have any health benefits. This is bad science and, therefore, bad policy.

This bill, as it is now, would not prevent the steady increase of fentanyl-related overdoses that we are seeing nationwide. It wouldn't achieve that because we have had temporary scheduling, and it is still going up. It will not prevent the loss of one loved one that we see happening right now or the pain that motivates my friend and senior Senator from Iowa.

This is a public health crisis, and our strategies should be informed by the science as a public health response. It requires a response that is dictated by science- and evidence-based interventions. Temporary scheduling, again, is not simply that. Classwide scheduling impedes scientists' and impedes researchers' abilities to develop evidence-based public health solutions that are needed to overcome the fentanyl crisis and deal with these fentanyl analogs.

Look, right now, temporary scheduling has given this false impression that Congress is doing something to deal with fentanyl analogs while the death count goes up. What it has done, really, is allowed the government to neglect the deeper calling for us to really deal with the challenges as they are. There are a lot of evidence-based intervention strategies—things we know that work—that we are not investing in. There are things that could help these crises in our communities.

Fundamentally, research by the FDA has confirmed that what is being proposed—classwide scheduling—has improperly scheduled substances with therapeutic promise and low abuse potential. We need to submit all fentanyl-related substances to the same scientific evaluation that we have done for other controlled substances. We need to test for their dangerousness. We must identify those that might be lifesaving overdoses.

All we have done for nearly 4 years now is schedule these substances without thinking about the scientific and medical evidence. Kicking the can down the road by temporarily scheduling these substances, yet again now, without making any effort to follow the scientific process, is irresponsible. We are preemptively criminalizing substances that may not be harmful and may actually be antidotes, that might be the answer in helping to curb these horrific overdoses and these horrible deaths. The temporary scheduling of fentanyl analogs without testing for pharmacological effects means that people will be convicted and incarcerated for substances that may have no pharmacological effect.

I want to again make clear that I am committed to ending this pandemic. I carry a picture in my wallet of someone who died from an overdose—it was given to me as I crisscrossed this country—so as to never forget the everyday emergency.

As the President mentioned in his speech to this body yesterday, confronting the opioid epidemic is something that Republicans and Democrats, united, can get behind. It should be bipartisan, but at the same time, our response should not be guided by the same old drug war ideologies that didn't stop the overuse of drugs. It should be guided by the scientific evidence. It should be guided by compassion. It should be guided by what works.

Classwide scheduling ignores the scientific and medical guidance. It sets in place a dangerous precedent, and it repeats mistakes we have made too many times in the past.

I have seen the drug war go awry. I have seen this body act in ways that have compounded problems and not helped people. I have seen the people with addictions—that are diseases—with nothing but jail and prison. We can get out of this crisis if we follow the science and if we follow what works, but it means Democrats and Republicans coming together.

I have tremendous respect for my colleague. I know we can find a way to move forward together. I know, if we continue to work together, we are going to find a way forward. I know, because of my experience with the senior Senator and his grace, that if we dedicate ourselves to working together, we can get good things done for this country. We have done it before. In this case, I think we can do it again.

So, with the deepest respect to my colleague, I respectfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to have just a short rebuttal.

I thank my friend for his kind remarks about me as I know that he and I have worked together on a lot of pieces of legislation.

I want to express my disappointment that my bill to extend fentanyl scheduling by 14 months cannot proceed at this point, but I won't back down from trying to extend this authority in a meaningful and long-term way.

There is more than one way to advance this bill. Today's vote is just one of those ways. Like history shows us, this authority can be included in funding legislation or move as a bipartisan, unanimous bill. I will continue my efforts for its inclusion in the upcoming omnibus appropriations bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Unless the Senator from New Jersey has something to say, I would like to proceed on another issue.

Mr. BOOKER. The Senator may proceed. I have nothing else to say.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

RUSSIA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, there are 192 nations on the face of this globe. Not one of those 192 nations, including Ukraine, is a threat to Russia. Regardless, the Russian military is continuing to wage a full-scale war on the nation and the people of Ukraine.

I am not sure of the reasons because I don't know Putin. The highest I have been in the leadership of Russia was, once or twice in my life, when having a meeting with Mr. Lavrov, the Foreign Minister. I think, when it comes to Putin, he has got to satisfy his ego or he is sick or maybe both.

The Ukrainian military and civilians are fighting for their homes. Obviously, they want to be an independent nation. They have our moral support and even some of our weapons, and they probably need a lot more help from the United States, short of putting troops in that country. I wish we had gotten them more defensive weapons before this invasion, but I still think there is more that we can do.

I am an original cosponsor of the NYET bill. "Nyet" is the word for "no" in Russian. This legislation that goes by this acronym, the NYET Act, literally says no to Russian aggression, with tough, targeted support for Ukrainian resistance efforts, even if that turns into a guerilla war, and there are a number of other bills to crush the Putin regime.

Russia, as we know, is a major oil and gas producer, so Putin's actions are hurting not just Ukrainian and Russian citizens but Americans as well. Just think of the \$1 or more increase in the price of gasoline we are paying today compared to 1 year ago. This situation comes at the same time Americans across the country are already paying more for gas than at any time

since 2014. That number comes from AAA data.

Last night, I was encouraged to hear President Biden pledge to "use every tool at our disposal" to limit gas price hikes after he imposed sanctions on Russia. It is time for Congress and the White House to rethink policies that threaten our energy independence and, at the same time, our national security.

That is why already this week I have helped to introduce the American Energy Independence Act with Senator HAWLEY, which would reverse the President's shutdown of the energy sector and return it to full production so that we will have energy independence like we had until 12 months ago.

Last night, the President talked about buying American products. Yet it seems like oil and natural gas—very major components of our economy—were excluded from his rhetoric. When it comes to oil, the United States imports nearly 700,000 barrels of oil a day from Russia. That is why I introduced legislation yesterday with Senator MARSHALL that would ban purchases of Russian oil.

I am also backing a new bill by Senator RUBIO to make American oil companies sever ties with Russian state-owned oil and gas companies as many of these companies already have done.

I support harsh sanctions that hit Putin where it really hurts him. In turn, you will affect the entirety of the Russian people, who are innocent of this dictator's running of their country, all the harm he is causing them right now. But we ought to free the world from a Russian energy blackmail and keep gas affordable here at home with American-produced energy.

Some of my colleagues are looking to lower prices at the gas pump by pushing for a gas tax freeze. That would be a very short-term, unsustainable move that would blow a hole in the highway trust fund.

Instead, I hope colleagues on both sides of the aisle can work with the President to reverse decisions that have increased the price of domestic fuel production.

You remember, on the first day in office, President Biden decided to shut down the Keystone Pipeline. President Biden should restart and expedite that pipeline.

Also, in January 2021, President Biden issued an Executive order pausing new oil and gas leases on public lands and Federal waters.

In July 2021, the Interior Department halted all oil drilling on leased land within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Now, take all these actions. They signal to capital investors that the heavy hand of the Federal Government will work against fossil fuel investments at every turn. You know, you read about bank regulators all the time, discouraging banks from making loans to energy fossil fuels. This hostile regulatory environment has crippled investment in fossil fuels, which, in turn,

is the reason we have the high price of gasoline.

Instead of more redtape, the President and Congress should work to cut regulations and Federal permitting that slow down, and has slowed down, domestic energy production.

We were, as you know, energy independent 12 months ago. Now, we are energy dependent. We have the President begging OPEC and Russia to ship us more oil.

Policies that encourage investments in fossil fuel production will increase domestic production, and the result would be lower gas prices, just like we can look back at the last 12 months, and all the action that has been taken has driven up the price of gasoline.

But instead of focusing on domestic energy independence last fall, as I have already referred to, President Biden instead asked OPEC to pump more oil. The OPEC cartel, of course, did not honor that request.

In 2000, when he was a Senator, now-President Biden acknowledged that anticompetitive behavior from OPEC harms American consumers and called on President Clinton to consider legal action against OPEC. OPEC is an organization which blatantly colludes to raise the price of oil.

I have introduced the bipartisan bill entitled No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels—it goes by the acronym NOPEC—which would allow the Department of Justice to hold OPEC accountable for its anticompetitive behaviors that artificially inflate global oil prices. I ask again for President Biden to publicly support the passage of NOPEC and work with Congress to pass this legislation into law.

Besides focusing on fossil fuels, we know that ethanol makes up 10 percent of the gas sold in the United States. When oil prices are high, it gives higher blends of ethanol a clear competitive advantage.

Historically, gas prices gradually rise in the spring and peak late summer when people are driving more frequently. But last fall, the Supreme Court rejected EPA's regulation allowing year-round E15 sales. Congress must move quickly to ensure that E15 can be sold this summer. E15 is a cleaner, higher-octane type of gasoline that contains more homegrown ethanol and less petroleum.

Both biodiesel and ethanol are proven domestic supplies of fuel that enhance our energy independence and, at the same time, lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Domestic biofuel producers are ready to step up and to give consumers lower gas prices that increase our national security and provide jobs in the heartland—good-paying jobs.

Most Americans do not care where the oil was produced when they fill up their gas tanks. They just want to fill up their gas tanks without taking out a loan to do it. But when conflict occurs in oil-producing regions around the world, Americans quickly realize

the importance of your gas being a mix of West Texas crude and Iowa ethanol.

In just over a year, we can see how the United States is losing energy independence. Instead of focusing on domestic fuel production, the President and his administration have caved to the most radical environmentalists in shaping our energy policy. It is time to reverse course.

I am taking the President at his word when he said in the State of the Union Address last night that he wants to use every tool at his disposal to limit gas price hikes. So I have just given several ways that we can use every tool that the President is talking about. And, of course, it is time to get to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, first, I want to thank my colleague who just spoke about some really important issues.

Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa talked about the fentanyl crisis that is facing our country. Unfortunately, this synthetic opioid is now killing more and more Americans. We are back to record levels of overdose deaths, and probably two-thirds of them are caused by fentanyl.

He is absolutely right. We need to be sure it is scheduled clearly as an illegal drug, as well as all the variants of it.

STRENGTHENING AMERICAN CYBERSECURITY ACT
OF 2022

Mr. President, I am coming on the floor today to talk about another issue that is really important to our country, and that is protecting us from cyber attacks.

Last night, I commend this body because the U.S. Senate passed legislation called the Strengthening American Cybersecurity Act of 2022.

What does that mean? It means that we took the time to do our homework, had hearings, and reported out legislation that helps protect our government data, including personal data of American citizens, but also our national security data and other sensitive information from cyber attacks.

Also, we put in place provisions to help protect the private sector, particularly critical infrastructure.

With what is going on right now around the world, particularly with regard to Russia and Ukraine, it is incredibly important that we put up better defenses here in this country, as well as helping Ukraine and other countries to fight against these cyber attacks.

In recent years, we have seen this time and time again. I am sure you remember the Colonial Pipeline. Remember, they shut down gasoline distribution to the eastern part of the United States. These were cyber attacks.

You probably heard of some of these other cyber attacks, like SolarWinds or ones where these criminal gangs demand a ransom using so-called ransomware. This is happening increasingly.

Again, my concern is, particularly with what is going on today in our volatile and dangerous world, that it will continue to happen and even become much more dangerous for us.

The House of Representatives now has a chance to take up this legislation and pass it. They have been working with us on this all along on a bicameral basis, the House and the Senate, Republican and Democrat. This hasn't been a partisan issue. It has been one of these issues where we have worked together.

Senator PETERS, who is the chair of the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee—I am the ranking Republican, top Republican—we have worked together on this, but so did a lot of other members across the aisle.

Senator RUBIO and Senator WARNER, Senator COLLINS, and others, they vitally represent the Intelligence Committee, which also has a strong interest in this.

In my role as the ranking member on Homeland Security, we spend a lot of time focused on the oversight of this issue, how to respond to things like SolarWinds we talked about or Colonial Pipeline or other cyber attacks. What we have found is that these cyber attacks are increasingly sophisticated and that our own government doesn't have the tools they need, and that is why this legislation is so important.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is an atrocity. It must not stand. But one of the things they have done in Ukraine for the last 8 years—and, really, before that as well, but particularly the last 8 years, since 2014 when Ukraine decided to turn to the West, to turn to us—is Russia had done these cyber attacks relentlessly in Ukraine. And they are stepping them up right now, along with the horrible scenes we see of the bombings of innocent civilians in their apartment buildings. I saw today that not only have hospitals and childcare institutions been bombed but also the Holocaust memorial in Kyiv has been damaged. So what the Russians are doing is appalling, and the entire freedom-loving world needs to stand up to it, and we need to help Ukraine more.

But one thing they have also done is they have launched these cyber attacks against the Ukrainian Government and against the private sector infrastructure in Ukraine. That, too, is a place where we can help.

But, again, we need to be sure that we have our own house in order here to be able to be more helpful, to be able to provide the best practices, and to help Ukraine be able to deal with these attacks, both kinetic attacks, these military attacks, and also the cyber attacks.

Many times, the cyber attacks are also mixed with disinformation attacks because the Russians are flooding the zone and trying to take their disinformation and their lies and spread it around to the Ukrainian people. By the way, not many people are

believing it anymore because it is so outrageous.

In China, we see another sophisticated cyber adversary ramping up their rhetoric and their incursion into Taiwan's air defense zone. All these threats make enacting this legislation we passed last night all the more important.

Legislation has three complementary bills combined into one. First, it will protect our critical infrastructure better from cyber attacks by increasing our visibility as a country into these cyber attacks and building the government's ability to warn potential victims and mount a nationwide defense and provide best practices to our critical infrastructure.

It will strengthen the government's own response and recovery capabilities, protecting sensitive data as well. And, finally, it will make government acquisition and use of cloud services more secure, more accountable, more efficient, and, significantly, keep countries like China and Russia from being able to access the cloud.

All of these bills were passed out of the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee with strong bipartisan support. And, again, it passed the Senate overwhelmingly last night.

The first of these bills that I mentioned is called the Cyber Incident Reporting for Critical Infrastructure Act. Cyber attacks against U.S. critical infrastructure, whether by foreign governments, like Russia and China, or criminal organizations, are, of course, a serious national security threat.

Today, no one U.S. Government agency has visibility into all the cyber attacks occurring against critical infrastructure on a daily basis. We need that. We need to know what is going on to be able to warn other infrastructure and to be able to respond quickly.

Right now, if Russia initiates a cyber campaign against U.S. critical infrastructure, there would be nothing to ensure that the U.S. Government is notified of that so it can mount a nationwide response and, again, warn other critical infrastructure operators similarly situated.

This bill would change that, enabling a coordinated, informed U.S. response to cyber attacks against the United States.

The Cyber Incident Reporting Act will require critical infrastructure owners and operators to report substantial cyber attacks within 72 hours and ransomware payments within 24 hours to what is called the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. It is called CISA.

CISA has done an effective job in the Trump administration, now in the Biden administration, but they need these tools to be able to do a better job.

CISA having this information will be able to use the data to immediately contact the FBI and other appropriate law enforcement but also to help with

best practices to mitigate the damage and to warn other critical infrastructures of threats, help these victims recover, analyze trends, and enable a whole-of-the-nation defense and response to these attacks.

It is a cyber attack. It is not soldiers with guns, but it can have some of the same horrible impacts and damage to our economy and to individuals. Again, think of the oil pipeline, Colonial Pipeline, being basically shut off to the whole East Coast of the United States.

The second bill that is part of this package is called the Federal Information Cyber Security Modernization Act, or FISMA.

FISMA is the acronym for the way in which we protect our Federal Agencies. And, unfortunately, we know that Federal Agencies—government Agencies—have failed to protect Americans' data—our data, personal data.

Last August, I released a report with Chairman PETERS detailing the significant cyber security vulnerabilities of eight different key Federal Agencies—Homeland Security, State, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Education, and the Social Security Administration—the Social Security Administration where a lot of our sensitive information is kept.

This report that we issued followed a report just a few years ago, in 2019, that I issued with Senator CARPER when I was chair of the Permanent Committee on Investigations, and we investigated all eight of these Agencies to determine how they were doing in terms of pushing back against cyber attacks.

In last year's report, only the Department of Homeland Security had an effective cyber security program. No other Agency we reviewed met the standard. And we found that, governmentwide, the average cyber security grade in pushing back against these cyber attacks was a C-minus—not the grade I would have wanted to take home to my parents. But that is the truth. We are just not prepared.

The report identifies several common Agency vulnerabilities, including the failure to protect personally identifiable information. Again, think about some of these Agencies, HHS or Social Security. That is a big issue; second, maintain an accurate list of the Agencies' IT equipment so they know what they have; third, install security patches quickly; and, fourth, replace vulnerable and insecure legacy technology. A lot of these Agencies have technology that needs to be updated that is stovepiped—in other words, isn't working well together and that makes it difficult to push back against these cyber attacks.

In the 7 years since FISMA was last updated, Federal Agencies have had these same vulnerabilities year after year, putting America's data at risk. So this legislation takes the important steps to remedy these systemic problems we identified. It incorporates rec-

ommendations from my bipartisan reports with Senator PETERS and Senator CARPER and will adopt a risk-based approach to cyber security budgeting; position the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency—CISA, we talked about earlier—as the lead Agency in securing these Federal networks. There needs to be accountability, and that is missing now.

We need to require Agencies to notify Americans whose personal identifiable information is compromised during a breach. To me, this is just a basic requirement for government. If you have personal information that has been breached because the government system has not been properly protected, you ought to be told about that so you can take your own steps to protect yourself.

Complement the Cyber Reporting for Critical Infrastructure Act by ensuring that Federal Agencies and contractors also notify CISA when they suffer a breach. We talked about that earlier. But having that information is very helpful.

And, finally, update the requirements for congressional notification when an Agency suffers a major cyber incident.

We have an oversight responsibility here. We need to know if there has been a major cyber attack.

Finally, this legislation includes a third part, which is called the FedRAMP Authorization Act. This is the one that will authorize the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program that deals with cloud computing and protecting the cloud. FedRAMP is a governmentwide program administered by the General Services Administration that provides Agencies and cloud service providers with a standard approach to evaluating, authorizing, and monitoring the security of cloud services. So when a Federal Government Agency wants to use the cloud services, they have to go through this process.

In the first 4 years of FedRAMP, the program authorized only 20 cloud service providers. Today, there are more than 230 cloud service providers—30 percent of which are small businesses. This act builds on the successes of FedRAMP and Agencies' continued push to adopt commercial cloud solutions by addressing existing costs and processing times.

But it also includes measures to strengthen the government's response to foreign interference in our cloud systems. Supply chain security experts have warned us about the weaknesses in FedRAMP that leave our cloud systems vulnerable to interference from countries like Russia and China, North Korea, Iran.

The reforms in this bill will allow for increased transparency and better monitoring of possible foreign influences in FedRAMP-approved systems. For example, it requires an Agency to review, on an interagency basis, government standards to identify and assess the origin of software and code to

provide the transparency and accountability needed into the FedRAMP-approved systems that are developed and maintained by foreign engineers in countries like Russia and China.

This bill also requires private-sector, third-party assessment organizations to disclose to GSA any information they have related to any foreign interests, any foreign influences, any foreign control, of course, or ownership, and to report a change in foreign ownership or control to GSA within 48 hours.

We have had instances like this where we are using cloud-based services that then become bought by a foreign entity and that is not reported and therefore they continue to provide these services, which is something we need to stop.

I commend the hard work of so many of my colleagues in crafting this broader legislation, including Chairman PETERS, Chairman WARNER, Ranking Member RUBIO, Senator COLLINS of the Intelligence Committee, as well as so many other colleagues on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and the Intel Committee.

I also want to thank our colleagues in the House, particularly Representatives CLARKE and KATKO, because this has been a truly bicameral exercise, both in terms of the oversight and identifying what the problems are and coming up with appropriate legislation.

And by the way, this legislation is strongly supported by those in the administration who are responsible for dealing with cyber attacks. They need these tools, and they want these tools.

We are not done yet because it has just passed the Senate. It has not passed the House. But we need to move quickly to enact these important changes to modernize our cyber security posture.

I urge the House to act quickly, to be sure we can protect ourselves from cyber attacks, particularly in this increasingly dangerous environment. I would hope that we could send this critically important legislation to the President's desk for signature very soon and be sure we are doing all we know to do to be able to better protect our country and our citizens in cyber attacks.

H.R. 3076

Mr. President, we are also on the floor today talking about the postal reform legislation. I know we are going back and forth trying to determine how many amendments will be offered and which amendments are germane or relevant to the legislation or not. But let me just say that we already had a strong vote to move to this legislation. We had a vote of over 70 Members, which is rare around here—a strong bipartisan vote saying let's move forward with this postal reform. And it is really important we do it because the post office is in deep trouble. And if we don't act, it is going to get a lot worse. We are going to have big problems.

In looking at this issue, again, in my oversight responsibilities on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, it looks like, in the next few years, the post office would probably go insolvent. And none of us wants that. When that happens, there would probably be a big government bailout.

So this legislation, along with internal reforms that the post office is making themselves—and I commend them for that—is intended to avoid that problem. It is intended to ensure that we can get this under control before there is an insolvency.

Right now, the post office is projecting a 10-year loss of \$160 billion if we just continue with the status quo. The reality is, the post office is in a tough business situation. Think about it. How many first-class letters have you sent recently? And how many did you send 5 years ago or 10 years ago? Probably more. Increasingly, we are relying on sending things by email and not sending them by first-class mail. That changes the post office's business model.

They are also delivering to more and more addresses because everybody wants to be connected to the post office to receive packages, to receive other kinds of mail—advertising, newspapers, bills. People who are reliant on getting their prescriptions through the mail are very eager to see the post office be strong and, of course, be a post office that addresses their universal service requirement—in other words, goes to every single mailbox around America.

So the math doesn't work very well when you have more and more addresses and not as much first-class mail to be sent out. That is one reason that the post office is in trouble. And we need to address that new reality.

The current Postmaster General, by the way, whose name is Louis DeJoy, came and talked to some of us yesterday about this and talked about an ambitious plan that he has embarked on along with the support of the postal Board of Governors and the support of the previous administration and this administration to ensure that we can transform the post office by finding efficiencies, including transforming existing capabilities to make sure they more efficiently meet the needs of the American people.

He has a 10-year plan that makes changes to make the post office more efficient, but it also continues to have this universal service obligation where everybody is going to be getting their mail. In fact, under our legislation, there is also a 6-day-per-week mail delivery requirement. So it is not just that everybody's post office box or mailbox or door is being serviced by the post office but that it is done 6 days a week.

But he needs help to do that. In particular, he has made it very clear to us that he needs the financial space to be able to put these reforms in place to be

able to take away some of the huge liabilities that they currently face at the post office. That is what we do in this legislation.

First, we eliminate a burdensome prefunding requirement for retiree health benefits. This has really been a problem for the post office. It has made their lives much more difficult. We mandated this in Congress back in 2006 for current employees. This has crippled the post office financially.

You should know, by the way, prefunding of healthcare retiree benefits is something the Federal Government does not do. So other Agencies and Departments don't have to do that. It is also not something the private sector does. So it is something that the post office uniquely has had to deal with, and, again, it has been a financial burden for them that has really made their financial statements extremely difficult.

Second, we require post office employees who are retiring, who have been paying into Medicare their entire career, by the way, to join up with Part B and Part D of Medicare—in other words, to go into Medicare, and instead of having the Federal employee health benefit plan be their plan, to have that be the backup and have Medicare be their primary payer.

Everybody is in Part A, by the way, already—Medicare Part A. But some Postal Service employees are not enrolled in Parts B and D.

Now, about 75 percent are enrolled in entire Medicare but, again, about 25 percent are not. So that saves money for the post office because Medicare is not as generous a program, frankly, as Federal employee health benefit plans or the new Postal Service Federal health benefit plan.

Third, we require the Postal Service to maintain its current standard of this 6-day-a-week delivery we talked about through an integrated delivery system of mail and packages. That simply says that the status quo ought to continue so that you are delivering packages and letters at the same time, not separately. That would be incredibly inefficient, to say, OK, you are going to have a separate system for packages and a separate system for letters.

In addition to doing all these things, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that the bill is going to save money. It is going to save \$1.5 billion a year to the American taxpayer.

I would also like to note what the bill does not do because there has been some information out there, including one editorial I saw recently. One, it doesn't appropriate any new funds to the U.S. Post Office.

Two, it does not change the accounting or cost structure for packages and letters. So it does not disadvantage private-sector carriers. It is the status quo. And that is very important to me.

Third, it does not impact the solvency of the Medicare hospital trust fund. That is the Part A trust that is

going broke in a short number of years. And that is the big focus of a lot of us: make sure that doesn't happen. It does not affect Part A trust fund at all.

It also does not increase the Medicare Part B or Part D premiums. And that is important, I think, to a lot of us.

And, finally, it does not allow the post office to enter into new commercial services like postal banking, which I believe would be a big mistake.

The legislation received strong bipartisan support when it was taken up in the House of Representatives a couple of weeks ago. It passed by a vote of 342 to 92. Not much gets passed in terms of major legislation along those lines. And I am proud of the people who worked hard on this on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol to come up with a bipartisan bill. It is not the bill any one of us would have written, but it is the right bill to save the post office.

I think Republicans and Democrats alike in the House looked at this and said: We have to do something here. We do not want the post office to go belly-up.

Some say that this is a whole lot better than the alternative. I agree with that. I think that is one of the reasons we need to pass this. It does get the Postal Service back on track; again, with reforms being undertaken internally at the post office itself—that combination of what we are doing here to provide them some financial space to be able to make the reforms and the reforms that they are doing.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation. Let's put the Postal Service in a position to succeed, to continue to provide these essential services. Small businesses and our veterans with regard to their healthcare, prescriptions being delivered, and our rural constituents absolutely need the post office to be there to service them. They rely on this. That is why so many, again, of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle strongly support this legislation.

I want to thank my colleague Senator PETERS for working with us over time to find consensus on this bill. Let's pass it and ensure that the Postal Service—the post office—remains viable for years and years ahead. Nothing is more important to my rural constituents, who talked to me about this quite a bit, than ensuring that the post office stays healthy. It is really important to, again, some of the veterans I represent who get their needed medication through the mail.

It is important to our voting system in this country because a lot of voting is by mail, including in Ohio, where for many years we had absentee voting that is no-fault absentee. We rely on our post office to ensure our ballots get delivered on time.

This is an opportunity on a bipartisan basis to ensure the post office remains strong. I hope we take advantage of it and pass this legislation and

have appropriate amendments in the meantime and get this done in short order.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Indiana.

S.J. RES. 32

Mr. BRAUN. I am here today to talk about vaccine mandates. Of course, I led the effort on the vaccine mandate that was preposterous when our administration said "Either take a vaccine or lose your job," impacting down to 100 employees.

Thank goodness the Supreme Court weighed in, citing that Congressional Review Act as one of the reasons it did it, taking that cue from here in Congress. But there still are mandates remaining, and it has to do with the Biden administration's pandemic policies that have just gone too far, and millions of workers are dealing with the consequences.

You cannot make these arbitrary decisions, especially when it was clear we were coming to some type of resolution, some type of different dynamic with the COVID saga, and then drop these kinds of mandates upon any entity at the worst possible time.

In this case, we are talking about the CMS vaccine mandate on healthcare workers—10 million of them affected. The very same frontline workers who have been heroes and served their fellow Americans during the pandemic were given a choice: your careers or a vaccine.

With all of the logic that went into the Supreme Court's ruling on employers with employees down to 100, it should apply to healthcare entities as well.

It is no surprise that you see healthcare workers leaving at the highest rate—leaving their profession—in over 20 years. It is worse in rural areas, like the State of Indiana, and that compounds other problems that rural places are contending with.

It also fails to acknowledge evidence-based science that clearly tells us stuff now that we didn't know before, like natural infection has a much better defense against COVID and it has more durability.

Common sense doesn't make any difference, and now we have got this. He has robbed these healthcare workers of the freedom to make their own choices and added to the challenges patients have had to access the healthcare system. Today, the Senate can overturn this mandate—another example of government in overdrive, getting into individual decisions it was never intended to.

I urge my colleagues to correct this later today, and let's base this on science, not political science, which seems to drive so many of the decisions here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to use a stethoscope as a prop during my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, last year, I put my sport coats and ties away and broke out some scrubs, found my stethoscope and a lab coat, and went to work fighting COVID on the frontlines of hospitals and community centers in Wyandotte County, KS, and Seward County, KS.

This is a picture of some of the heroes I worked with. I think what is important to note is this is a time when none of us knew how bad this virus was. It reminded me, as a medical student, working on HIV patients. Myself geared up from head to toe with patient protective equipment, personal protective equipment, nurses, respiratory therapists, radiology techs—all of us not knowing how bad this virus was and how easily it could spread.

Today, these heroes are being punished. These heroes came to work every day covered from head to toe in personal protective equipment, with each one knowing that they could contract COVID-19 from any one of their patients at any given time.

This particular setting, an ICU—an ICU with 8 beds and 13 patients.

Despite the risk to them, to their families—think about that. Think about having children at home or a spouse, that you were not only risking your own life but the fear of taking this virus home with you. But they threw themselves into the fire, so to speak, all in the effort to save Kansans from a pandemic that was raging across our communities.

In the earliest months of this pandemic and still to this day, our healthcare heroes have displayed sacrifice and dedication to the American people. It is a reminder to all of us how essential these people are in ensuring the safety of our communities.

They weren't left unscathed. Between burnout and suicide, the pandemic took a heavy toll on their physical and mental health—doctors, nurses, all the supporting staffs in these hospitals, in the nursing homes, in the emergency rooms.

The resulting exodus of fatigued and demoralized doctors and nurses and other frontline workers is exacerbating a labor shortage which already existed across rural Kansas and across rural America long, long before the pandemic occurred.

Since February of 2020, roughly one in five healthcare workers has quit their job—one in five—according to a poll published late last year. In September, the American Nurses Association sent a letter to HHS Secretary Becerra urging the Agency to declare the nursing shortage a national crisis and to take immediate action to confront the issue.

I can tell you, I don't talk to any doctor back home, any hospital administrator, who is not going to grab me and say: We have got a huge nursing shortage. You have to do something about it.

The nursing homes, the rehab centers are all suffering huge, huge nursing shortages. The nursing colleges are now having a huge shortage of teachers. Nearly a third of the country's 15,000 nursing homes reported a shortage of nurses or aides. Hospitals have been forced to recruit foreign nurses, and National Guardsmen have had to fill in as nursing assistants to ease these problems. These shortages are particularly impactful in rural areas like my home State of Kansas.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services acknowledges there are currently "endemic staff shortages for all categories of employees at almost all kinds of healthcare providers and suppliers." Despite this acknowledgement, President Biden and his public health officials went forward with this vaccine mandate, knowing it could and would lead to more firings—firings like those we saw in New York, where 33,000 healthcare workers were fired—33,000. They were fired, retired, or placed on unpaid leave because they chose not to abide by the State's mandatory inoculation policy.

Labor shortages at healthcare facilities will impede access for the elderly and the poor—those who are supposed to be cared for under Medicare and Medicaid.

In addition to the impact this would have on the healthcare workforce, this mandate puts additional burdens on hospitals and State surveyors. The rule requires covered entities to comply with redtape by requiring them to develop and implement policies to ensure compliance with the mandate, meanwhile taking nurses away from that contact with the patients who need the attention.

CMS estimated that the cost of this mandate on private-sector entities would exceed \$158 million. Follow-on guidance issued by CMS recently also required State surveyors to enforce the Federal Government's vaccine mandate by verifying compliance at healthcare facilities. This will take away, again, limited resources at the State level and prevent them from fulfilling their traditional surveying and certification duties, not to mention multiple States have laws on their books prohibiting vaccination as a condition of employment for State agencies.

As a physician, I am confident that the vaccine has saved lives, and I am so grateful for the vaccines. However, whether to receive it or not is a personal choice between individuals and their doctor, not mandated via unconstitutional Executive actions. I still believe in the sanctity of the patient-physician relationship.

Make no mistake, this Federal vaccine mandate is not about public health or science and fails to account for changes in data and the circumstances of the virus. If it were, we would recognize natural immunity as a highly effective way to combat the virus. Mountains of evidence show that those who achieved immunity through

natural infection—many of them being on our frontline, those healthcare heroes from yesterday—are highly protected against reinfection.

The mandate was also crafted when the Delta variant was the dominant strain in the United States. Omicron is now the dominant strain. It is much milder and has a 91-percent lower risk of death than Delta.

Additionally, research shows the traditional COVID vaccine dosing regimen provides little protection against transmission of the Omicron variant, basically said that natural immunity is at least as good if not better than vaccination from the original vaccines.

As noted by Dr. Fauci, "Omicron, with its extraordinary, unprecedented degree of . . . transmissibility, will ultimately find just about everybody," and even those who have received the initial vaccine and subsequent booster "will still get infected." And we saw that play out, right? We all saw that play out. Many, many people who had gotten the vaccine ended up with the Omicron virus, and certainly we also found out that natural immunity was much better than the original vaccines against Omicron.

Most absurdly, in late January, the CDC issued guidance that allows COVID-positive healthcare workers to return to work. Let me say that again. The hypocrisy. The CDC issued guidance that allows COVID-positive healthcare workers to return to work even if they are still testing positive. How many people in America would want a COVID-positive respiratory therapist intubating their loved one in an ICU?

These examples just show how flawed the science is behind the CMS vaccine mandate. As previously stated, that is because this vaccine mandate is not about public health or science. The Biden administration's mandate is about fulfilling their desire to control every aspect of our lives, and it is a slap in the face to the hard-working men and women who never took a day off in the frontline fight of the COVID-19 battle.

These are real people with real families. They are working to feed their families, and they have mortgages to pay. And these are smart people. These are well-educated people—people who thoughtfully considered the vaccine and then decided it was not best for them. These were my medical school classmates, successful physicians working at medical centers, experts in their fields who had looked at the data and had deeply either religious reasons or scientific reasons for not taking the vaccine.

Each day, we hear from Kansans faced with the difficult decision of taking the jab or losing their job. We even surveyed dozens of healthcare providers across the State who are already citing shortages and other staffing issues due to the mandate. In fact, 87 percent of the surveyed oppose the mandate or cited numerous concerns with it.

These jobs can't be replaced overnight, and with the March 15 deadline for nearly all healthcare workers who haven't received two doses looming, what we are about to witness is a government-induced labor shortage and, in turn, a health crisis we can't afford. That health crisis will affect every American, whether you are waiting for your elective hip to be replaced or you are waiting to get your loved one moved from a hospital setting into some type of a nursing home or assisted living facility. You all, every one of us, will be impacted.

One respondent put it best when he told us this:

[W]e are concerned that the execution [of the mandate] will exacerbate an already dire workforce crisis in long term care. A hard deadline with no resources for providers or glide path for unvaccinated workers is likely to push too many out the door and ultimately, threaten residents' access to long term care.

Now, I know some here will say that the Supreme Court ruled to uphold this mandate earlier this year and this is settled, but that is not the full story here. The Supreme Court opinion which lifted the stay on the rule focused primarily on the Secretary of HHS's statutory authority to impose conditions upon healthcare facilities participating in Medicare and Medicaid. This does not mean it is a good rule or it is a beneficial condition to have placed on those facilities given everything I have laid out here today. In fact, it is a hardship to those facilities, and it is a hardship for the families of the loved ones who are in those facilities.

This fight against a harmful rule continues here on the Senate floor, and I am going to keep fighting along with all those throughout this Nation's Federal judicial system.

Quick update. Sixteen States have joined together in a new filing last month to once again block the Federal Government from enforcing the mandate in their respective States. Sixteen States think the CMS has got this wrong. They think the White House has got this wrong. Additionally, the attorney general in my home State of Kansas, Derek Schmidt, is leading the fight. He, along with nine other attorneys general, has asked a separate Federal court to reopen litigation.

No, we are not even close to stopping this fight.

It has been an incredibly tough time these past couple of years. We have lost over 950,000 Americans to COVID-19. We have seen mental health issues skyrocket, suicides on the rise, and substance abuse increase.

But if there is one thing that is for sure, though, it is that Americans will keep fighting to get through this. Frontline workers in hospitals, doctors' offices, community health centers, and beyond will fight even harder; that is if we remove the burden of the vaccine mandate and our healthcare heroes aren't forced to leave their jobs.

Just this week, England terminated their COVID vaccination requirement for all health and social services. We must do the same. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution of disapproval to invalidate President Biden's overreaching and harmful vaccine mandate for our healthcare workers. This is a major element of the government's overreaching COVID-19 response that must begin to be scaled back. Not only is it coercive and unconstitutional, the mandate does not take into account the fact that natural immunity is as effective as the vaccines and that vaccines do not prevent transmission of the Omicron variant. Additionally, we all know—we all see it—we have a massive labor shortage in our healthcare industry and must do everything in our power to fight for Americans who ran to the sound of the battle, for these are the true heroes of the pandemic and deserve our best fight and utmost respect.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, as you saw at the State of the Union Address last night, a number of pandemic restrictions in Congress have seemingly ended, thanks to the CDC's convenient decision to update its guidance on mask wearing and social distancing earlier this week.

Some Democratic politicians in the room were cheering, chanting, embracing, and crowding. Though many of them continue to publicly condemn those who have chosen not to wear masks or socially distance, they were maskless and were not distanced themselves. So why the immediate change? Well, perhaps it is because they simply could not waste the political opportunity for partisan theater with which they could raise the curtain on their Big Government aspirational new normal.

Sure, President Biden can attempt to hide behind CDC guidance, the very same CDC guidance that crafted a complex system to provisionally grant Americans permission to live as free citizens, but he fell into a perpetual pitfall of the left. He forgot that Americans are a lot smarter, perhaps, than he thinks they are.

Americans can see through the transparent political theater and the constructive convenient timing. They see the hypocrisy. They know that the only science that has changed is the political science. They saw the powerful elite gather to praise their own playacted benevolence, foresight, and leadership, all while countless Americans who are suffering from the real failures of President Biden and his party are losing their jobs because of draconian Federal vaccine mandates.

What a sorry state of affairs and what a sad set of conditions.

Americans see and feel the hypocrisy. The people of Utah and the United States do not want the false freedom pushed by a political class that refuses

to relinquish control over citizens' lives. They want real freedom, the kind promised by the Declaration of Independence and protected by the Constitution. They want to be able to live their lives, raise their families, and make their own medical decisions without a "Mother, may I" from President Biden or the vast throngs of nameless, faceless, unelected, unaccountable Federal bureaucrats.

They want to be able to provide for their families without the threat of being fired if they don't submit to a medical procedure that they don't want.

I am honored to join my friend and colleague, Senator MARSHALL, in standing for American workers. Today, we stand for the millions of healthcare workers that were some of the heroes of this pandemic. They came to work and cared for the sick before vaccines were even available. They should not be forced to submit to a procedure or risk their livelihoods.

This isn't our first effort to end these Federal mandates. I have tried dozens of bills dozens of times to end this draconian overreach. I am proud to continue this fight.

We will not stop until freedom is restored. We will not stop until American moms and dads can provide for their families without kowtowing to President Biden's vaccine mandates and without submitting to Presidential medical orthodoxy in this or any future administration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes, followed by Senator MARSHALL for up to 1 minute, prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, as my colleague from Utah just noted a minute ago, he has been asking for votes on this matter repeatedly. And today, he and others seek to invalidate a regulation issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that require most healthcare providers to be vaccinated.

And suffice it to say, this is something that the Supreme Court has ruled on. The Supreme Court has actually taken this up and agrees with our position that, in effect, this is an area where there is a strong public interest. And I believe what my colleague is proposing is just far outside the mainstream of opinion regarding vaccinations in America. There simply is a point where an anti-mandate agenda becomes a dangerous anti-vaccine agenda, and my colleagues on the other side, in my view, have crossed that line quite some time ago.

So I am just going to take a few minutes to describe why I think this is such an extreme position outside what the vast majority of Americans agree and in contrast to what the Supreme Court has said.

Americans support a vaccine provision or requirement for healthcare workers by a 20- or 30-point margin—no surprise about that. Everybody is concerned about sitting in a room with a doctor or nurse who may be contagious and who has been unvaccinated. I want to particularly emphasize the people affected here who are the most vulnerable based on what we have seen during the pandemic. We are talking about those with chronic illness and seniors.

Three-quarters of the Americans who died of COVID-19 were seniors, and 200,000 of those COVID deaths were Americans living or working in long-term care facilities like nursing homes. Many others were in and out of hospitals and doctors' offices routinely.

Making sure that healthcare workers are vaccinated, colleagues, I don't think is about any partisan position. It is about a commonsense policy designed to keep seniors—people I have worked with for 7 years; before I came to the Congress, I was director of the Gray Panthers—I think we all believe we want vulnerable people to be safe. So I am going to start by quoting a ruling by the Roberts Court—hardly, at this point, colleagues, some kind of radical left judiciary. Recently, they allowed the vaccine requirement for healthcare workers to go forward, and I am just going to quote:

Ensuring that providers take steps to avoid transmitting a dangerous virus to their patients is consistent with the fundamental principle of the medical profession: First, do no harm. It would be the very opposite of efficient and effective administration for a facility that is supposed to make people well to make them sick with COVID-19.

This vaccine provision or requirement is about keeping our healthcare workforce safe. Doctors and nurses in our country are overwhelmed. That is what they just told me as I went about my State, going to hospitals and vaccination sites and other healthcare programs.

These providers have been working nonstop for years under extraordinary stress, and what they are all about is honoring that Hippocratic Oath and trying to save lives. At times in this pandemic, our hospitals have been jam-packed with COVID patients. If lots of doctors and nurses are out sick during a big COVID wave, that has got an impact on the standard of care for everybody. It drops for COVID patients, for stroke patients, for people hurt in car accidents. Our country desperately needs to protect our healthcare workforce.

Now, right at the heart of my colleagues' case—and as my friend from Utah said, we have had a number of debates about this subject—my colleagues say every person is unique, and there needs to be flexibility when it comes to vaccines. Colleagues, I am just fine with that. The fact is, the administration is allowing for medical and religious exemptions. Flexibility is written into the rule because that is just plain old common sense.

Vaccine requirements aren't anything new for healthcare workers. Flu shot requirements have been common for a long time. When you go into healthcare, it is understood that a vaccine requirement can be part of the job.

Furthermore, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has already pushed back the deadline for healthcare workers in several States to have their first vaccine dose. Originally, the deadline was in December. Now, it is February. The idea that this is somehow an inflexible and unreasonable mandate coming from nowhere is just plain wrong.

I would just close by way of saying it is time for us to move past these battles that I think regrettably continue to make this pandemic—which strikes me as having nothing to do with politics—such political hutzpah.

It is good news that the Omicron wave is receding. With any luck, that will be the last major COVID wave that threatens to overwhelm our healthcare system. We all want our lives to get back to normal, and the way to do that is with smart public health policies—and smart public health policies, we know, consistently get broad support from the American people. That is what the vaccine provision requirement for healthcare workers is all about. That is why the Supreme Court upheld it.

I would urge that we oppose this joint resolution and do everything we can to make sure that healthcare workers are going to be vaccinated. And as I said to my constituents when I was home this weekend, what I wanted to make sure was that everybody who could, get vaccinated as quickly as possible.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague from the great State of Oregon, but his arguments all rely upon one assumption, and that is that the vaccine works to prevent transmission.

But the vaccines don't work to prevent transmission.

The Supreme Court's ruling was not a ruling on merit. The Medicare and Medicaid vaccine mandate will impact every family, every person across this great Nation. We already have a dire shortage of doctors, nurses, ultrasound techs, custodians, housekeepers, kitchen staff in all these hospitals and nursing homes. This mandate will result in more staffing shortages and firings.

The science behind this mandate is quite outdated. Natural immunity is stronger than immunity achieved through vaccination at this point in time.

Last night, during the State of the Union Address, President Biden said:

Let's stop looking at the COVID-19 as a partisan dividing line.

Let's take him at his word. Let's make our actions be consistent with his words. Let's repeal this divisive mandate today.

I urge all my colleagues to support our resolution.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON S.J. RES. 32

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Under the previous order, the clerk will read the joint resolution by title for the third time.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 67 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hagerty	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Lummis	Tillis
Cramer	Marshall	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Tuberville
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Daines	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Portman	

NAYS—44

Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	

NOT VOTING—7

Baldwin	Klobuchar	Smith
Feinstein	Luján	
Inhofe	Padilla	

The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) was passed, as follows:

S.J. RES. 32

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in

Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services relating to "Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination" (86 Fed. Reg. 61555 (November 5, 2021)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Arkansas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3731

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, the world is in chaos everywhere you turn. In the last week, Vladimir Putin has launched an unprovoked, naked war of aggression against the people of Ukraine. The reason he did this is because of his imperial ambitions to reincorporate Ukraine into the greater Russian Empire in his mind but also because he perceived weakness and opportunity in the West and, regrettably, from President Biden.

We saw last night the President congratulated himself on the diplomatic coalition he has put together to confront Vladimir Putin. That is akin to Neville Chamberlain celebrating the coalition he assembled against Germany after Germany invaded Poland. The whole point was to deter Vladimir Putin. That failed. Why did that fail? Because for the last year, the President has projected weakness and signaled to Vladimir Putin that he didn't have the nerve to counteract his ambitions. His first action in office was to give Vladimir Putin his No. 1 foreign priority—a no-strings-attached extension of a one-sided nuclear arms control treaty. Shortly after that, he gave Vladimir Putin his second foreign priority. He waived sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. We didn't really take stern measures for the Colonial Pipeline hack from Russian-affiliated hackers. We rewarded Vladimir Putin with a high-stakes summit last summer.

But it is not just foreign policy; it is also domestic policy here at home. As day follows night, Vladimir Putin gets emboldened and more aggressive when the price of oil is higher. For the last year, the Biden administration has done everything they can to stifle the production of American oil and gas that would not only keep the price of gasoline lower for our citizens, keep the price of heating their homes lower, it would also constrain Vladimir Putin by reducing the revenues he has for his war machine.

But the Biden administration's war on oil and gas has, in fact, emboldened him, so much so that we are to this day still importing hundreds of thousands of barrels of Russian oil and petroleum products every day.

Since Vladimir Putin launched his naked war of aggression last week, we have filled his coffers with millions and millions of American dollars to fund his aggression against the Ukrainian people. We still haven't taken the steps necessary to stop this—sanctions on Russian oil and gas to cut off those revenues, to bankrupt Vladimir Putin's war machine, but also to continue the pressure that those sanctions impose,

to begin to once again pump more oil and gas here at home.

If we really wanted to add the pressure to Vladimir Putin that oil and gas sanctions would put on him, we would unleash a flood of American oil and gas into the market and deprive Vladimir Putin of those revenues. But, instead, on the very day—literally the very day—last week when Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine, President Biden halted all new oil and gas leases on Federal lands. Think about that. A ruthless dictator invades an innocent nation of 45 million souls, using oil and gas as a weapon against the West, which could come to the aid of that nation, and President Biden's action on that day was to halt all new oil and gas leases on Federal lands.

To the extent the President even talked about energy in his speech last night, he simply made pipedream promises about green energy that maybe will come true in a decade or two but will do nothing at the moment to deter Vladimir Putin and, in fact, will continue to embolden him by highlighting a lack of seriousness to confront and undermine his aggression.

In fact, the President only mentioned oil once last night in that entire speech when he bragged about releasing 30 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which wouldn't fuel our country for even 2 days.

What we need is not half measures; we need a sustained, reliable, and affordable flow of American energy. That is why I am here to ask for unanimous consent for my bill ordering the Biden administration to start issuing new oil and gas leases for Federal lands.

It won't solve all of our problems, but it is an important and immediate step that we can take to start producing the American oil and gas that will undercut Vladimir Putin's war machine.

President Biden's foolish energy policy couldn't have come at a worse time for Ukraine, but we can begin to end it right now by putting our American oil and gas workers back to work. I urge my colleagues to stand with Ukraine and to support the bill. It is really a choice between American energy or Russian energy. We can decide.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 3731, which is at the desk; further, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MARKEY. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object and to explain why to my colleagues here in the Senate.

This is an unfortunate, terrible exploitation of a crisis in Russia by the

oil and natural gas industry of the United States of America. They have no shame. They have no conscience. They have no sense of decency.

This industry, this unscrupulous industry led by the American Petroleum Institute—really the “American Prevarication Institute,” which is what we are hearing here today and what we have heard on airways with tens of millions of dollars of television ads saying we have just got to “drill, baby, drill” here in the United States, that that is the answer to the invasion of Ukraine by the Russians.

Well, a few facts might be helpful so that the American people can understand, once again, that all the American Petroleum Institute is about is tipping consumers upside down at the pump and shaking money out of their pockets. That is who they are.

So just a few facts here: The oil industry in the United States has bid for leases on American public lands. Right now, 53 percent of the leases that the oil industry, the natural gas industry of the United States have onshore in our country—in our forests, in our fields—they are not drilling on them.

Fifty-three percent of all the leases that they have from the American people, have they been drilling to protect us against this day? No, they have not.

What about offshore? Well, offshore, the oil industry is not using 77 percent of all of their existing leases off our shores. Right now. And what do they do? They come in here with crocodile tears, if only you would give us more leases, if only you would take more of the American people's land and give it to us, then we will drill.

Well, this is just hypocrisy on stilts. This is just, again, the American Petroleum Institute engaging in exploitative profit-making actions, and the Republican Party, sadly, is cooperating with them in this time of crisis for the short-term benefit of the American Petroleum Institute—which should hang its head in shame about this debate that we are having right now, when 77 percent of all the leases offshore they haven't drilled yet; 53 percent of all the leases onshore they haven't drilled yet.

And by the way, that area, you want to know how big it is? It is just slightly smaller than the State of Arkansas. In other words, they have got almost an Arkansas of public lands that they already own, they are already leasing from the American public, and they are not drilling on it. That would be every square inch of Arkansas. They are not drilling.

What they do is they bid low for all the leases. They keep them. They wait for the day when the price goes high. Then they start drilling. They just hoard them. And they are looking for this as another opportunity to hoard more—to hoard more.

Now, the President has responded by deploying the Strategic Petroleum Reserve in the short term. There are 600,000 barrels of oil a day that come into the United States. Thank God our

Strategic Petroleum Reserve has 600 million barrels; in other words, you can deploy 600,000 barrels every day for 1,000 days out of our Strategic Petroleum Reserve to make up for the Russian oil. We can do that right now.

But one thing that we should never do is just get stampeded by this oil and gas industry greed. This industry that has blocked our movement to all-electric vehicles, blocked our movement to wind and solar, blocked our ability to blunt the need to have oil for our vehicles, natural gas for our homes because it is inconsistent with their business interests, their profit-making. They should just be ashamed of what they are doing here today—ashamed.

And the Republican Party should have no part of it. GOP should not stand for “Gas and Oil Party.” That is what we are hearing here today. That is what I am listening to.

And if we are going to respond, let's respond together as a nation. Let's not break this down into partisan politics, special interest politics in our country. Let's come together as a nation. Let's work to ensure that we are protecting ourselves, that we are protecting consumers.

And if the American Petroleum Institute wants to be part of this, there is nothing stopping them from bringing out 2 or 3,000 rigs this week, starting to drill on an area the size of Arkansas, waiting for them, so the oil can start pumping—not waiting to go through a whole leasing process, bidding process. They can do it right now. And you know what is going to happen? They are just going to sit there because they are making a bundle. They are tipping people upside down. They are exploiting this.

And by the way, let's not understate the partnership which American companies—some key oil companies—have with the Russians. That is real, too, right now. Let's just not forget the whole history of this. How do we get here? How do we get bad foreign policy? How do we get bad national policy? How do we get bad oil and gas policy? How do we get it? Well, ultimately, behind the curtain in almost every instance you find an oil and gas interest somewhere involved.

And we are hearing it here today. We are hearing it here today. They want to drill off the coast of Florida. They want to drill off the coast of Maine or, at a minimum, they want the leases so they will be ready someday to be able to do it. That is their goal. And meanwhile, they just sit on their hands, not drilling, not drilling on an area the size of Arkansas because they know the less they do that is the more that we can create a panic in our country, with false answers—answers that may work on FOX, but it doesn't work in reality. It just doesn't work. It is just wrong—plain wrong—to be using this as an issue right now for the benefit of the “American Prevarication Institute.” And behind this whole curtain of dark

money in our country looms the largest voice, which is the oil and gas industry of our country.

So we have got a chance here. We have got a chance to respond in the short run with the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, getting our allies to produce more oil, asking our own American companies to produce more oil, and then passing out here on the floor the tax breaks for all-electric vehicles.

Now, I will give you a little number. If we just deploy 15 million all-electric vehicles, we would back out all the oil from Russia, just 15 million all-electric vehicles. The next 15 million backs out all of the Saudi oil. The next 15 million backs out all of the oil from the Middle East.

You want to do something? You want to terrify them? You want to destroy their business model in Russia or the Middle East? That is what you should be doing. But, no, what we hear from the Republicans is we are not going to support any of that agenda: no money for wind, no money for solar, no money for all-electric vehicles, no money for new battery storage technologies—no, no, no, no to the long-term solution for the next generation of Americans, young people, pages here in the well who want to know what is the plan for the long term.

So that is the sad fact of what is happening here today on the floor. So, from my perspective, we don't need to be throwing good land and waters at bad actors in our society. It just is wrong. We shouldn't do it. And as a result, I object to the motion of the Senator from Arkansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. COTTON. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

MEDICARE

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, imagine this. You are a CEO of a company, and one day your CFO comes into your office with bad news. The company's costs are rapidly growing, and you aren't bringing in enough money to keep pace with the rising costs. The solution here is simple: come up with a plan to reduce costs and continue serving your customers and honoring your agreements while ensuring that the company can stay afloat.

If you don't adapt and evolve, you fail and go out of business. Most Americans understand that. Unfortunately, Congress is not like most Americans. We are in charge of running Medicare, and for decades, the cost of Medicare has risen dramatically, but Congress has no plan to address future costs.

And now we have Medicare's Board of Trustees reporting that the hospital insurance trust fund, the fund which supports Medicare Part A, will be insolvent in 2026. You can see here is where we are. In just 4 short years—in just 4 short years—we are going to run out of money to keep paying for services for Americans most in need.

We are talking about things like emergency surgery, in-home healthcare, and hospice care. By 2030, 4 years after insolvency, the trust fund will be \$335 billion in debt. Medicare Part A cannot pay when it lacks funds.

What makes matters worse, the Medicare trustees have been warning about this for years. They have told us that Medicare Part A hasn't met even the most basic short-term goals for fiscal health since 2003.

Let's go back to the imaginary company I mentioned earlier. If you were an employee of that company and your salary depended on the company's success, how would you feel if, for 18 years, the company's leadership knew that the company would go under unless they fixed the problem, but it never happened?

Instead of fixing the problem, no one did anything. They just kept using up the company's savings. That is basically what has happened and continues to happen with Medicare.

Here is what is shocking. Absolutely nothing has been done. Washington has completely ignored the warnings about the rising costs and declining revenues for Medicare, and there is no plan to repair the system. Career politicians in the Washington establishment have acted recklessly and immorally.

They are plunging Medicare into billions of dollars of debt, debt that our grandchildren will have to pay off for the benefit of those in the present. To make matters worse, Washington politicians think they can continue to treat Medicare like a piggy bank and draw as much money as they want from it to pay for another unsustainable and unfunded program.

We saw them use Medicare savings to help fund road construction in an infrastructure bill. Make no mistake, I want to have better ports and better highways, but robbing Peter to pay Paul with money Peter doesn't have? That is wrong.

Kicking the can down the road and letting our debt balloon is a disservice to the 60 million—60 million—Americans, including the 4.5 million Floridians, who rely on Medicare.

Now, Senator SCHUMER is trying to pass a bill that will stick Congress's greedy hand into the Medicare trust fund—this time to pay for the U.S. Postal Service.

In 2020, Part B spending was \$418 billion. By 2030, the cost will double to \$871 billion.

Look at this. I mean, this is unbelievable.

The Part B and Part D trust fund is funded through a combination of premiums paid by beneficiaries and direct transfer from the U.S. Treasury of collected tax revenue. That means the future costs of Medicare Parts B and D are going to be paid for by higher premiums for retirees and higher taxes for all Americans.

Today, someone who retires at the Postal Service can keep their health plan into retirement, with the option

of adding Medicare, but the Postal Service needs to pay the full cost of the health plan if the retiree doesn't choose Medicare. Now, this is costly to the post office, so the proposed solution in Senator SCHUMER's postal reform bill is to force all future retirees into Medicare as a means of saving money for the post office. This actually just shifts costs away from the Postal Service onto the Medicare Program—from one government program to another—and it is a cost borne by hard-working taxpayers and nonpostal retirees. This is a gift to the post office balance sheet, but it is a cost to everybody else. In other words, the solution is as bad as the problem.

On top of that, the CBO doesn't even have an accurate estimate of how much this bill will actually cost. I sent a letter to the CBO asking what the future cost of the bill would be to Medicare. While they could tell me there would be \$5 billion in new deficits, they couldn't provide data past 2031, when Medicare will be most affected by this proposal. Yet Congress wants to pass this bill and pretend like it is solving a problem when it only makes matters worse. If you look at the limited CBO score we have and think about what it says, it shows that it increases costs to Medicare and reduces costs to the Postal Service.

Advocates are quick to say that it saves the government money, but that is wrong. The post office keeps all the savings and just moves the costs to Medicare. It doesn't actually save the taxpayer any money.

We have got to stop doing business like this. How can anybody in this body explain to their constituents that this is the right way to pass bills? How can anyone really say with a straight face that kicking the can down the road is the right thing to do?

Do you know why the American people don't trust us? It is stuff like this. When Congress passes a bill like this, with zero committee process, zero amendments so far considered in the Senate, and the bill ends up being terrible, well, it is not hard to see why the American people don't have a ton of faith in Congress to solve problems.

In 2020, Medicare spending was almost \$1 trillion. That is \$1 trillion in mandatory spending without any review by Congress.

I want real reform. I want to make sure retirees have the healthcare they have paid into and that the Postal Service is actually sustainable. That is why I have introduced an amendment to require the Postal Service to pay for any new costs to Medicare that this bill will bring. This will ensure that Medicare isn't used like a piggy bank. This will ensure that the taxpayer and future nonpostal retirees aren't forced to bear the burden of this Postal Service bailout. It would ensure that the Postal Service pays their fair share.

I am thankful to have the support of groups like 60 Plus that represent the interests of America's seniors.

Unlike many career politicians who are running Washington off a fiscal cliff with over \$30 trillion worth of debt, I have actually been a CEO. I have run companies and have had to help solve financial problems. I have listened to CFOs and have worked with budgets to turn things around. I didn't come to Washington to fit in and maintain the status quo. I came to make real change that benefits American families, and this bill, as written right now, doesn't do anything to help anyone.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and join me in demanding that Senator SCHUMER slow down and put this bill through the proper process. American taxpayers and voters who sent us here deserve better than this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Texas.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, today is Texas Independence Day. One hundred eighty-six years ago today, Texans declared our independence from Mexico, and we fired a shot for liberty that was heard around the world.

As I have done a number of years in the past, I am going to read the letter from the Alamo that Lieutenant Colonel William Barret Travis wrote calling for help. It is a letter that energized Texans across our great State and that energized lovers of liberty everywhere.

I read this letter the very first time that I ever stood and spoke on the Senate floor, and these are the words that inspire us even 186 years after they were written.

Colonel Travis writes:

To the People of Texas & All Americans in the World—

Fellow Citizens & compatriots—I am besieged, by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna—I have sustained a continual Bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man—The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken—I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls—I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch—

The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily & will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country—Victory or Death.

William Barret Travis, Lt.Col.comdt.

PS: The Lord is on our side—When the enemy appeared in sight we had not three bushels of corn—We have since found in deserted houses 80 or 90 bushels and got into the walls 20 or 30 head of Beeves.

Travis.

The brave men and women at the Alamo would go on to give their lives for liberty, including Travis, Jim Bowie, and Davy Crockett.

Shortly thereafter, the Texans were victorious at the Battle of San Jacinto. With a cry in the air of "Remember the Alamo," the heroes who gave their lives for liberty inspired a successful revolution, and the Republic of Texas was formed.

Sam Houston, one of the founding fathers of the Lone Star State, was also born on this very day 229 years ago.

Sam Houston was a great American. He was born in Virginia and spent many years in Tennessee, where he served in the U.S. House of Representatives and then became the Governor of Tennessee. In Texas, he was the George Washington of Texas. He served as the commander in chief for the Texas Army and led the Texas Army to victory in our revolution. When Texas became independent, Houston served in the Texas House of Representatives and then as President of the Republic of Texas. When Texas joined the United States, he served in the U.S. Senate and then, finally, as the Governor of Texas.

He was a tireless, talented leader and a great statesman who believed in freedom. His words, "Govern wisely and as little as possible," are still true today, and the Lone Star State still endeavors to follow that principle.

The Republic of Texas was an independent nation from 1836 to 1845—for 9 years. Then Texas joined the United States of America.

Indeed, there is one fact I discovered a couple of years ago. Heidi and I are members of the First Baptist Church in Houston. We discovered that the First Baptist Church was actually started by American missionaries in a foreign country. Texas was an independent nation, and American missionaries came to the Republic of Texas and founded the First Baptist Church, which, today, thrives in my hometown of Houston.

Texans are proud Americans, but we are also proud of the history—the diverse, brave, extraordinary history—of those Texans all those years later. William Travis, Sam Houston, Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett, and all of the people they led risked everything to make freedom a reality for generations of Texans.

I am reminded of a story that was told to me by a former Senator from Texas, my friend Phil Gramm.

Phil Gramm, in the early 1980s, was a Member of the House of Representatives. He was a Democrat. He was a conservative Democrat. Ronald Reagan was President, and Phil Gramm, as a conservative Democrat in the House, introduced the Reagan tax cuts, and he fought for the Reagan tax cuts. Phil described a meeting with other conservative Democrats in Texas back when we had conservative Democrats in Texas—a meeting wherein he was urging his fellow Democrats to support the Reagan tax cuts. Phil drew an analogy to the Alamo on that fateful day when Colonel Travis drew a line in the sand with a sword and called on each of the men there to step across that line and commit to defending the Alamo.

One of those other conservative Democrats said to him at the time: Phil, everybody who stepped across that line died.

Phil, in not missing a beat, chuckled and said: Yes. Yes, they did. And do you know what? Everybody who didn't step across that line died, too, and nobody remembers their names.

Today, I celebrate heroes—heroes who fought to make freedom a reality for generations of Texans. Today, we celebrate, and we honor their sacrifices.

To every Texan, I wish you a very happy Texas Independence Day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

UKRAINE

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, the Ukrainian people have captured the hearts of freedom-loving men and women around the world since Putin launched his unprovoked invasion of their homeland last week.

Even as we speak, they are still under attack, not just in the capital of Kyiv but in cities all across Ukraine. The images coming out of Ukraine are truly heartbreaking: newborn babies in need of intensive care, kindergarten buildings and apartment complexes being shelled indiscriminately, and tearful goodbyes between loved ones.

Putin's invasion has caused Europe's largest refugee crisis this century. According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, nearly 900,000 Ukrainians have fled to neighboring countries so far, but many of the other images we have seen show inspiring courage. Citizens of EU countries have welcomed their Ukrainian neighbors with open arms. Regular, everyday men and women—teachers and software engineers and moms and dads—have taken up arms to defend their country and their loved ones. President Zelenskyy has chosen to remain in Ukraine when he could have fled, refusing to desert his people in their darkest hour.

The English writer G.K. Chesterton once said:

The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.

I can't think of a better way to describe this conflict.

The Russians are fighting to fulfill Putin's imperial ambitions. The Ukrainians are fighting to protect their families, their democracy, and everything that they hold dear. That may be their greatest advantage as they, God willing, continue to hold out in the coming days.

Responsibility for this horrific invasion lies squarely with Putin. Leading up to this crisis, President Biden and our allies offered Russia every opportunity to choose deescalation and peace. Instead, Putin chose to use diplomacy as a smokescreen, buying time while he prepared for war.

In a deliberate message of contempt for the international community, Putin ordered the attack to begin

while the U.N. Security Council was meeting to discuss Russia's buildup on the Ukrainian border. Here is a glimpse into how little power organizations like the U.N. have in moments of crisis like this: During this meeting on what to do about Russia's coming invasion, the Russian Ambassador was presiding.

Innocent Ukrainians as young as 6 years old are being killed because one man fancies himself the next Joseph Stalin. Because of one man's desire to restore the borders of the Soviet Union, the fundamental principles of security in Europe are in peril.

In response to this invasion, President Biden has announced new sanctions against Russia. These measures will affect 2 of Russia's largest banks—Sberbank and VTB—as well as 45 of their subsidiaries. The administration is also imposing sanctions against several other Russian financial institutions and a number of state-owned enterprises.

The United States, with our allies and partners, not just in Europe but also in Asia, have agreed to pursue even more aggressive sanctions against Russia. That includes beginning to remove certain Russian banks from the global SWIFT financial messaging network. It includes freezing the currency reserves of Russia's central bank. All of this will make Putin and his inner circle feel the pain. It will hurt Russia's ability to wage war now and in the future. Many companies are joining this effort on their own, and they are withdrawing from the Russian market.

Putin's unprecedented aggression demands an unprecedented response. Beyond economic sanctions, this invasion has only made the NATO alliance stronger and more resolved to stand firm against unlawful aggression. This includes Germany, which has traditionally taken a more positive view of Russia than many of our other European allies.

Germany's Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, has rightly committed to increasing Germany's military investment after decades of putting defense spending on the back burner. Scholz also said Germany would seriously pursue options to reduce their reliance on Russia for natural gas. If he follows through on increasing Germany's military spending, that will bring German defense investment above the 2 percent target NATO has set for its members by 2024—a target that most NATO countries still aren't meeting.

While historically neutral Sweden and Finland are considering joining NATO, they aren't members yet, but they are still sending much needed military aid to Ukraine. Even Switzerland has broken its tradition of neutrality in order to freeze billions in Russian assets being held in Swiss banks, and our other allies and partners around the world, like Japan and Australia, are helping fund the Ukrainian resistance as well.

After this near universal condemnation from the world's democracies,

Putin hasn't backed down. No. He has turned to nuclear blackmail. He put Russia's nuclear forces into special combat readiness on Sunday, explicitly using Russia's nuclear deterrent to discourage Western nations from supporting Ukraine.

This kind of escalation is unthinkable to Americans but not to Putin. This is why the men and women of the U.S. Strategic Command, which is based at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, work day and night to deter threats like these. There is a reason that their motto is "Peace is Our Profession." Separately, at least five Offutt-based jets from the Air Force's 55th Wing are flying reconnaissance missions in Europe. Together, these planes have flown 10 of the 86 missions the United States and our NATO allies carried out in the days leading up to the Russian attack. I was told of these missions during a visit to Offutt last Friday.

In addition to what we have done so far, I believe the Ukraine crisis demands that we fundamentally reevaluate our approach to dealing with Putin. We can no longer pretend that he might, one day, play by the same rules as the rest of us.

Since he came to power, Presidents of both parties have sought to improve relations with him. Too often, they have overlooked decades of bad behavior to try to achieve that goal, hoping that American restraint might lead Moscow to take that same approach.

If it wasn't clear even before this attack, the events of the past week have proven that idea to be a fantasy.

Putin thought Russia would get a quick win when he invaded Ukraine. He never expected this kind of resistance from the outmatched and the outnumbered Ukrainians. But he didn't account for their bravery. He didn't account for the fact that while Russia is fighting to gobble up more land in Eastern Europe, the Ukrainians are fighting to protect their children, spouses, parents, and their very way of life.

After the events of the past week, Putin's naked aggression, his imperial ambitions, and his contempt for the international order are undeniable.

Global norms and treaty obligations mean nothing—they mean nothing to him. Russia had explicitly sworn to uphold Ukraine's territorial integrity in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, one more agreement added to the long list of those Russia has violated under Putin.

After his completely unprovoked invasion, this would-be 21st-century czar has lost whatever credibility he had left. The United States and our allies must keep this in mind as we think about where we go from here.

We have to accept that as long as Putin is in power, a cooperative relationship with Russia will not be possible. We have to do what we can to push back against Putin's warmongering and continue to support the brave people of Ukraine.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

KLEPTOCRACY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, as I rise today, kleptocracy is on the march in Europe, showing how unchecked corruption leads to evil.

Vladimir Putin's corrupt regime fabricated a pretext to invade and subjugate the sovereign and peaceful nation of Ukraine. Putin's attack helps divert the Russian people from his festering corruption and misrule, as jailed Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny put it.

America and our allies are meting out stiff sanctions; and my colleagues and I here in Congress are working on additional measures to deliver punishing financial blows to Putin and his corrupt oligarchs. But we must consider how we arrived at this moment.

Putin has, for decades, deployed corruption and kleptocracy to strengthen his grip on Russia's government and to project power and influence throughout the region. In the process, he decimated Russia's free press, attacked—physically and economically—all political opposition, and grew his own personal fortune to what is thought to be the largest in the world. I say "thought to be" because Putin's wealth is hidden behind shell corporations and nestled in tax havens, far from the view of the people he robs and oppresses. And along the way, he cultivated—through favors, force, or fortunes—a group of oligarchs who serve him.

It is important to understand that Putin isn't special. We have plenty of kleptocrats around the globe. Putin just happens to be in charge of a big and oil-rich country with a military at his command, a gangster with an army running a gas station, as Senator McCain used to say.

America is engaged in a growing clash of civilizations against this brand of corrupt leadership. Democracy and the free market are on one side; kleptocracy and corruption are on the other. And we will prevail in this clash by pursuing one powerful value of rule of law society: transparency.

Kleptocrats and criminals seek the protection of our rule of law and our secure financial system to stow their illicit money, but they need anonymity. They need to hide it. That is why so much anonymously owned luxury real estate sits empty in America, in some places actually driving up local housing costs for normal people. And that is why shell corporations in American States multiply.

The Pandora Papers last year revealed webs of American shell corporations and trusts hiding dirty assets. It revealed professionals—lawyers, accounts, and real estate agents—aiding and abetting the hiding of those dirty assets. Shining the light of transparency on kleptocrats' money is a potent countermeasure to their power.

Late in 2020, Congress passed the most important anti-money laundering

reform law in two decades: the Corporate Transparency Act. It was very bipartisan. Senators GRASSLEY, GRAHAM, WYDEN, RUBIO, BROWN, CRAPO, WARNER, COTTON, and I all spent years getting that bill done. Our aim was to arm law enforcement with knowledge of the “beneficial owner”—the real person—who is behind American shell corporations.

Now, the Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, FinCEN, is implementing our beneficial ownership provisions. And the new rule promises to be a strong countermeasure.

It requires anyone who exerts substantial control directly or indirectly over a legal entity to identify themselves as the beneficial owner. That is what we wanted. It is clear enough so that companies know what they have to do, while minimizing the risk that bad actors can evade disclosure.

And its timelines for reporting and updating beneficial ownership information are fair, providing law enforcement and national security officials timely information without imposing unreasonable turnarounds for legitimate companies.

The beneficial ownership rule also avoided a trap. Some had urged FinCEN to add exceptions to the reporting requirements on top of the ones Congress included in the bill. Well, we worked hard to come up with the right list of excepted entities. It is encouraging to see FinCEN stand firm and avoid watering down the rule with new unjustified exceptions.

FinCEN is also working on a review of Bank Secrecy Act regulations with an eye toward a new “anti-money laundering and counterterror financing” framework. This review offers a chance to take on some big challenges.

We need to make sure American professionals aren't aiding and abetting kleptocrats. Investing in hedge funds, luxury real estate, high-priced art, expensive cars, mega yachts all requires help from professionals, and those professionals aren't bound to “anti-money laundering and counterterror financing” safeguards like our banks are.

Private investment funds are worth about \$11 trillion. You can hide a lot of mischief in \$11 trillion. An FBI intelligence bulletin leaked in 2020 warned that “threat actors” used those funds to launder their money into rule-of-law financial systems. That is a vulnerability we need to close.

This aiding and abetting problem, giving aid and comfort to our enemies, extends to professional services from lawyers, accountants, company and trust formation agents, even PR firms. But on this front, FinCEN's hands are tied. Congress will need to step in to clean that up.

Kleptocrats and criminals constantly change the methods they use to hide their money. Trade-based money laundering, for instance, allows bad actors to trade everything from vegetables to washing machines as a way to move

their money around internationally. We need better coordination among key agencies involved in overseeing trade and better information on suspicious financial and trade activity that is shared more efficiently among various Federal authorities.

Real estate is a massive target for money launderers. In August of last year, the watchdog group Global Financial Integrity released a report showing over \$2.3 billion laundered through American real estate over the previous half decade. As Global Financial Integrity would tell you, this is just what they could identify. The real number is probably far higher.

The good news there is we have a countermeasure that works well. In 2016, FinCEN started the “geographic targeting order” program, which requires title insurers to report to FinCEN beneficial ownership information of shell companies that stash money in high-priced real estate. That program started in New York and Miami, then expanded to a dozen jurisdictions nationwide. The Congressional Research Service has reviewed it and said these targeting orders work.

Now, FinCEN is proposing a rule to make these orders permanent and expand coverage across the United States. It looks like FinCEN will deliver that improvement. And if it does, that is a big win, particularly if that rule lines up with our beneficial ownership rule and if it extends to cover commercial, as well as residential real estate.

In Congress, we should pass legislation to help FinCEN address professional aiders and abettors. There is bipartisan legislation in the House, the ENABLERS Act, which I hope to introduce here in the Senate. I have also introduced bipartisan legislation to make it a crime for foreign officials to demand bribes from Americans. At the moment, it is only a crime to pay bribes. And we should pay close attention to others in the dark economy, like drug traffickers and terrorists.

I am working on legislation to target money laundering related to the illicit narcotics trade. Indeed, we had a hearing on it today.

Finally, we need to work together with the international community. When U.S. defenses are strengthened, kleptocrats will direct their dirty money to some other willing sanctuary. So it matters that the Biden administration has announced a transatlantic, interagency task force to help crack down on ill-gotten assets stowed in the West by Russian oligarchs and their families, their mistresses, their stooges, whomever. This is exactly the right approach. We must work with friends abroad to close off hidey-holes for oligarchs, bolster the rule of law, expand judicial transparency, and increase access to justice in struggling jurisdictions.

I met recently with a Member of the Ukrainian Parliament who said a phrase—that we were talking about ac-

tually during the Munich Security Conference codel—which was: It is not enough to freeze the oligarch's assets; we need to seize the oligarch's assets.

We can do so even theatrically, and to take a camera through the preposterous and grotesque wealth and show the people of Russia what was stolen from them would be as significant a public relations victory as when Ukrainians went through their oligarch's mansion and showed everything from gold toilet seats to private petting zoos.

Kleptocrats, like Putin and his oligarchs, can be defeated. A little sunlight will vanquish them. Free societies and the rule of law can win the long battle we face against kleptocracy and corruption.

This is a national security matter, not just a question of doing good. This is a national security matter, and these are the tools—the ones I have described, the tools of transparency—that will secure our victory.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the war in Ukraine. One week ago, Vladimir Putin attacked Ukraine by land, by sea, and by air. Now we know that thousands of people are dead.

Vladimir Putin prepared for this invasion, and he prepared over the course of at least 3 months. Month after month after month, he moved troops, he moved weapons, and he moved them to the border with Ukraine. Now, many of these troops are attacking the capital city of Kyiv. The Ukrainian people are fighting bravely. Their example is an inspiration to the world. They are outnumbered, they are outgunned, and yet they continue to fight for their freedom.

Make no mistake, Vladimir Putin has caused this war. He alone is responsible. He is responsible for the death and the destruction that the world is witnessing now. Yet, it is undeniable that the Biden administration's so-called deterrence and diplomacy have failed.

Joe Biden ran for President on competence and on his foreign policy expertise. As a candidate for President, Joe Biden said Putin's days of tyranny would be over if he became President—Putin's days of tyranny would be over if Joe Biden were elected President. The opposite has occurred under this administration.

Vladimir Putin has become emboldened like never before. Putin is cunning, he is opportunistic, and he is aggressive. When he sees an opportunity, he takes it. He can smell weakness, and he views Joe Biden as weak and ineffective. Clearly that has become even more so after Joe Biden's disgraceful and deadly surrender from Afghanistan. Enemies of ours around the world have become emboldened.

After Afghanistan fell, Vladimir Putin increased his weapons testing.

Just a few months later, Vladimir Putin put 100,000 troops on the border of Ukraine. How did the President of the United States, Joe Biden, respond? He lobbied this body, the Senate, against imposing sanctions on Vladimir Putin.

In January, this Senate voted on sanctions for Putin's Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. I came to the floor; I argued that the Senate needed to act quickly. Almost every Democrat in this body had previously supported sanctions. Under pressure from the White House, the Democrats reversed course. They buckled to the demands of the President of the United States, who had a different view than this body in a broad, bipartisan consensus had had previously of sanctioning the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline between Russia and Germany. Senate Democrats blocked the sanctions.

Look, energy is the reason that Vladimir Putin is flush with cash. He has hit the jackpot. His energy revenues are up, and more than \$1 out of every \$3 that Vladimir Putin has in Russia's treasury is energy-related. High energy prices today that Americans are paying at the pump and people around world are paying are the reason why Putin can indefinitely—how he can afford this invasion.

So who is Putin's No. 1 rival for energy production? Well, it is the United States. But under Joe Biden, American crude oil production is down—down more than a million barrels each and every day from what it was prior to the pandemic.

It is not a lack of American energy resources, and it is not a lack of American energy workers. They want to work. The energy is in the ground. This is a direct result of the far-left driven anti-American energy policies of the Joe Biden administration.

On Joe Biden's first day in office, he killed the Keystone XL Pipeline, and he bragged about it. So how much energy would be coming across from the Keystone XL Pipeline? Well over 800,000 barrels a day. But that number today is zero.

How much energy are we bringing in from Russia each and every day into the United States, imported from Russia, sending money to Vladimir Putin? Well, 670,000 barrels a day. If he hadn't killed Keystone, we would be bringing more energy in that way, and we are now buying and sending money to Vladimir Putin. And the President bragged about it, thumped his chest: I killed Keystone.

He also blocked new oil and gas leases on public lands, stopped American exploration for energy in the Arctic. Joe Biden approves of Vladimir Putin producing energy; it seems he is only opposed to American energy production.

Just days before he surrendered in Afghanistan, Joe Biden sent his National Security Advisor to beg Russia to produce more oil to sell to us. It is hard to believe. People watching said

that can't be true, and I would say: Go to the White House website. Go right now; see if it is still there. It was there two nights ago—the National Security Advisor saying: We are asking OPEC+—and the “plus” is Russia; it is Putin—to produce more energy to sell to us.

Why should we depend upon people who are our enemies, whose intentions are not kind or caring for us, and who is now—Vladimir Putin is attacking his neighbor in a bloodthirsty way—rather than allow us to produce American energy that we have today in the ground in this Nation?

So it is no wonder that Putin can now afford another assault. Oil hit over \$100 a barrel last week—the highest in 7 years, and it is even higher than that today.

Today, American families in every State are paying \$1 a gallon or more for each additional gallon of gas that they put in the tank than they were the day Joe Biden became President of the United States, and that is soon going to be even a higher number, a higher amount that people are going to be paying as a result of this President's policies. The situation is getting worse.

President Biden's response to the buildup to the war in Ukraine has been mismanagement and weakness. After Russia invaded Ukraine, Joe Biden issued sanctions on Russia that are far too little too late. The Biden deterrence was after the fact. That didn't seem more like punishment than deterrence. It reminds me when President Obama said he was going to be leading from behind. Deterrence after the fact is the same thing as no deterrence at all. Try to deter someone from doing something.

Even after the invasion has occurred and even after we see the tanks lined up heading into Kyiv, Joe Biden is not yet ready to sanction Russian energy and clearly not ready to produce American energy to make up for what we buy from them.

His Deputy National Security Advisor went to the podium and said our sanctions are not designed to cause any disruption to the current flow of energy from Russia to the world. This administration has caused plenty of disruption in the flow of energy from America, from our homeland. We are not going to disrupt energy from Russia, oh, no. It was actually Germany that stood up and finally stopped Putin from getting the pipeline. Joe Biden won't touch the one industry that is propping up Vladimir Putin. Yet he seemed to be happy—Joe Biden seems to be happy with his continued war on American energy. He has effectively put harsher sanctions on American energy workers than he does on Russian energy thugs.

The war in Ukraine is going to lead to higher energy prices in this country; there is no doubt about it. But we have seen no change in Joe Biden's energy policies in spite of the abundant energy resources we have in this country. The

White House Press Secretary was asked recently if Joe Biden was considering allowing more energy production here at home in the United States. We have the resources; we have the workers; the jobs are necessary; and, effectively, she just said no. We heard nothing about it in the State of the Union last night—not a thing.

Over the weekend, actually, the President's Press Secretary went on television and doubled down. She said she refused to rule out importing oil from Iran. Oil and gas leases on Federal lands are still in limbo.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, FERC—and there will be a hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee tomorrow—recently decided, in a 100-percent partisan 3-to-2 vote, to make it even harder to build natural gas pipelines in America. Harder.

The day after Russia invaded Ukraine, this administration, the Biden administration, said uranium was no longer a critical mineral for the United States—no longer a critical mineral. American businesses get half of the uranium we use from Russia and its partners. It is a critical mineral but not according to the Biden administration. Now we are going to become even more dependent on Russia, and Putin will get even wealthier.

It seems like Joe Biden and his advisers want to turn our energy sector into what we have seen over the last number of years in Germany—dependent on other countries, begging enemies to help us keep the lights on.

And just before the Russian invasion, John Kerry, the President's Climate Envoy, said in an interview with BBC—this is the former Secretary of State of the United States—said he was concerned that the war in Ukraine would distract people from his climate agenda. You can't believe it. This is very disturbing to people all around my home State, and I would think all around America. This is a delusional obsession, distracted from the reality of the world and of our Nation.

Innocent people are being slaughtered. Vladimir Putin is conducting nuclear drills. People around the world are terrified. People are looking to the United States for leadership, and we have a high official of this administration concerned it is going to distract from this White House's and this administration's climate agenda.

The American people know what we need to do. We need to continue to support and send lethal weapons to our friends in Ukraine, and clearly we need to produce more American energy. We have it. We have it in the ground. This administration will not let us get it out. More American energy will help us at home. It will help bring down prices at home. More American energy will help us defund Putin's military aggression. It is our energy dollars that are paying for Putin's killing machine.

More American energy will help our allies from being held hostage by

Vladimir Putin. This is why I have introduced legislation called the ESCAPE Act, Energy Security Cooperation with Allied Partners in Europe. It expedites the sale of natural gas from America to our NATO allies so they don't have to buy it from Vladimir Putin. I brought it to the floor yesterday, and Democrats objected to a unanimous consent to pass it.

I sent a letter to the President today with every Republican on the Senate Energy Committee as well as Senator LUMMIS—sent a letter to the White House today detailing 10 specific actions that the President of the United States can take right now to produce more American energy and undermine Vladimir Putin and help other NATO allies and help the people of Ukraine. We as a nation are much better off selling American energy to our friends than for us as a nation to have to buy energy from our enemies. More American energy means more American strength and more American security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). The majority whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, I came to the floor to request unanimous consent for the Senate to take up and confirm six U.S. attorneys and two U.S. marshal nominations.

These nominees are all highly qualified. They have critical law enforcement experience, and they want to serve this country at new levels. They were voted out of the Judiciary Committee, which I chair, by a voice vote. They have the support of their home State Senators. They have the support of other local law enforcement. They deserve to be confirmed. We need them—right now—without further delay.

And the obvious question is, Why are they being held up? Why are these dedicated men and women not yet in office, ready to tackle violent crime—which we know is a problem across America? Why aren't they in office to prosecute fraud and terrorism? Why aren't they there to protect families and children across America? One reason—the junior Senator from Arkansas.

You see, when I made my unanimous consent request—a request joined by the majority leader and Senators from all the affected States—one Senator objected. Only one Senator refused to allow these individuals' confirmation so that they could continue to serve this Nation and the cause of law enforcement. And that same Senator, the junior Senator from Arkansas, continues to engage in this mindless obstruction, jeopardizing the safety of communities outside of Arkansas for reasons which are still hard to understand.

Why is the junior Senator blocking well-qualified individuals from law enforcement? What has he got against law enforcement at this moment in America's history? Well, it doesn't

have anything to do with the nominees themselves or their qualifications. We have asked him over and over. He has no complaint about any single one of them. He happened to pick these people out as his political targets. He is concerned about a completely unrelated issue. Let me tell you what it is.

In the summer of 2020, Federal law enforcement personnel were dispatched to Portland, OR, to help protect the Federal courthouse. A number of those Federal officers now face lawsuits relating to the events that happened there.

The Department of Justice often represents Federal employees who were sued in their individual capacity. Under governing regulations, the Department of Justice goes through a process to determine that such representation would be “in the interests of the United States.”

And in this matter, the Department of Justice has either represented or paid for the representation of more than 70 law enforcement officials who have been sued. The Department has declined to represent one individual—only one—and continues to review three additional requests for representation.

The Senator from Arkansas says he wants to know why, but the Department of Justice has made it clear it can't comment on these four cases. Remember what you first learned when you were elected to the U.S. Senate and somebody came to you and said: I need for you to be my advocate. I need for you to be my champion.

You said to them: I would like to do it, but first you have to sign a privacy waiver, a confidentiality waiver. I can't represent you or talk about you unless I have that waiver.

The last time we came to the floor, I asked the junior Senator from Arkansas: Have these three who are being under review, for example, these Federal employees, given you a privacy waiver? Can you tell us what the circumstances are that slowed it down?

No. So here he is, their champion and advocate, and they don't trust him with a privacy waiver or they would rather their circumstances not become public. They made that decision. It is pretty complicated in a way. The bottom line is, who is paying for this complication and the stalling tactic? Innocent people, six U.S. attorneys, two U.S. marshals—not in the State of Arkansas.

The Department of Justice has made it clear it can't comment on these cases “in light of significant confidentiality interests and applicable privileges.”

The Senator from Arkansas is hearing none of it. For example, DOJ's regulations make it clear that communications about an employee's request for representation are protected by an attorney-client privilege. The Senator from Arkansas wants us to ignore that. The Privacy Act prevents the Department of Justice from disclosing per-

sonal records related to employees without their consent.

Unless things have changed in the last 2 weeks, the Senator who is advocating for these people has never received that. He has never received those consents. These privileges protect the privacy of the very law enforcement personnel whose interests the junior Senator from Arkansas claims to represent. The Senator claims to be speaking on behalf of his deputy marshals, but he is asking the Justice Department to violate legal privileges and attorney-client privileges that are designed to specifically protect them and other Federal employees.

It is important to add that it is standard practice for any Member of Congress to obtain a Privacy Act waiver. We have done it thousands of times in our office—an act that gives a waiver for a constituent, authorizing the office to make inquiries on their behalf. Apparently, the Senator from Arkansas doesn't have that waiver or he would explain to us what the circumstances are. It seems that the people he wants to protect don't trust him with that information or don't want it to become public.

The Senator is upset that the Justice Department is following the law and a process required by their own rules and regulations—a process that now affects four individuals. His response is to block the confirmation of every U.S. attorney and every U.S. marshal on the Senate calendar. How can you claim, as he does, to be tough on crime if you are blocking well-qualified law enforcement officials from serving because of a grievance that has nothing to do with them personally? The junior Senator from Arkansas should let these law enforcement officials do their job.

Often we hear the complaint: Oh, they want to defund the police. You heard last night, President Biden said we need to fund the police and got a standing ovation from everybody.

This is a new approach. Instead of funding the police, this one Senator is going to stop law enforcement from even doing their job. For example, yesterday, I chaired a hearing in the Judiciary Committee. We examined how the Federal Government can help prevent and respond to the surge in carjackings across America over the last 2 years. It was an important bipartisan hearing with witnesses from law enforcement, community groups, and the automobile industry testifying about solutions to a problem that is an urgent issue in many of our communities and testifying to the need for U.S. attorneys to enforce the law in their jurisdictions. The same junior Senator from Arkansas, who is leaving these U.S. attorneys spots vacant because he is unhappy with the way he is being treated by the Department of Justice, didn't attend the hearing. And he is blocking votes on Federal law enforcement nominees charged with helping to protect our communities from

carjackings and other violent crimes. How can that be anything other than soft on law and order?

Before I proceed to my unanimous consent, I want to note the overwhelming support these U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshal nominees have from law enforcement professionals in their States. We are receiving dozens of letters because of this outrageous hold by the Senator from Arkansas—letters that speak not just to the nominees' qualifications but the need to confirm them now.

Consider the support for Chief LaDon Reynolds to be the U.S. marshal for the Northern District of Illinois. Senator DUCKWORTH and I have received letters from the director of the Illinois State Police and police chiefs in towns and cities like Park Ridge, Hazel Crest, and Calumet Park. It is unanimous. Chief Reynolds is a man for the job, and he is waiting and waiting and waiting on the junior Senator from Arkansas.

The Senate has also received letters of support for several of the other nominees who face this needless blockade. Aaron Ford, the attorney general of Nevada, has written in support for Jason Frierson to be that State's U.S. attorney. Both Senators from Nevada took the floor last time we brought this issue up and supported him.

The chiefs of police of Rochester, Duluth, and Saint Paul, MN, have joined the Sheriff of Ramsey County, MN, urging the Senate to quickly confirm Andrew Luger as Minnesota's U.S. attorney and Eddie Frizell to be the State's U.S. marshal.

Mark Totten, nominated to be U.S. attorney for the Western District of Michigan, has the support of county prosecutors and sheriffs throughout the State, as well as from Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel and the Michigan Association of Police Organizations.

And the Sheriff of DeKalb County, GA, urges the Senate to swiftly confirm Ryan Buchanan to be U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Georgia.

These law enforcement officials want reinforcement. We have the professionals to take over these positions now; one Senator holds them up. They are just a few examples of the broad bipartisan support these nominees enjoy.

These State and local law enforcement officials know how eminently qualified the nominees are, and they have told us as much. They know we can't and shouldn't waste another day supporting law enforcement. They know it is time for the Senate to act now.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 660, 661, 662, 663, 739, 740, 741, 742; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that

any statements related to the nominations be printed in the Record; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object because, here we are again, 2 weeks later and nothing has changed.

The Democrats and the Department of Justice once again want their well-connected and wealthy political nominees confirmed, while the Department of Justice hangs out to dry four career law enforcement officers and threatens them with fiscal ruin and bankruptcy.

The Senator from Illinois said I am having none of it. You are absolutely right; I am having none of it.

These officers, I remind you, faced down leftwing street militias for months in Portland. They were attacked with blinding lasers, ball bearings, Molotov cocktails. There were efforts to lock them into the courthouse and set it afire and burn them alive.

Now, the Senator from Illinois keeps saying that my objections are completely unrelated—those were his words—or had nothing to do with these nominees. We have heard this now for weeks. I don't know why he keeps repeating it. I will give my answer once again. I am not making objection to some random, unconnected agency. I am not upset that the Corps of Engineers didn't approve a water project in Arkansas.

I am not making some doomed-to-fail demand like Merrick Garland should resign in disgrace—though he should. I am making a very specific point about this Department.

If Merrick Garland and the Democrats want their political nominees to be confirmed on a fast-track basis, then they need to protect their career law enforcement officers from financial ruin and bankruptcy.

I have talked to these officers; the anxiety and the stress that this has created for them is real. They have received no explanation whatsoever beyond "not in the interest of the United States." That is not an explanation; that is a conclusion.

Three of them haven't heard anything at all. It has been months—actually, more than a year. The Senator from Illinois said the Department of Justice often represents law enforcement officers sued for actions in the line of duty. It is not "often represents." It is "almost always represents."

I have spoken with multiple former Department of Justice leaders. They say they cannot remember a time when they declined to represent a law enforcement officer sued for actions in the line of duty.

The Senator from Illinois, once again, waves around the idea of a privacy waiver like it is a big "gotcha" or something. I don't have a privacy waiver,

but I know what these officers would say. They would say, We have no idea what the Department would tell us.

So if the Senator from Illinois would like me to be a good bureaucrat and run off and get a privacy waiver, I guess I could do that. And then once they gave it to me, I would ask them, Why did you get denied coverage? And they would say, I don't know. They won't tell us anything.

The point of the matter here is that career law enforcement officers are being hung out to dry and facing financial ruin. And they cannot get an answer, and we cannot get an answer.

Now, is it possible they engaged in misconduct? Sure. It happens. However, I would note, as I did last time, that all four officers are on unrestricted active duty—unrestricted active duty. Three are in the special operations group. One is in the warrant group. Both assignments likely to result in situations where the threat of violence, and even lethal violence, is high.

If these officers somehow acted inappropriately in Portland to the point we can't represent them when they are sued by leftwing activists, surely, they shouldn't be serving high-risk warrants. Surely, they shouldn't be out on the street in the special operations group. So I can only infer that is not the case.

The Department of Justice won't tell us anything more. They won't tell these officers anything more. None of these facts has changed—nothing in 2 weeks.

The only thing we know that we didn't know 2 weeks ago, actually, is that three of these marshals received an award for their service in Portland.

This is the award that was given out to marshals who risked their lives in defense of the Federal courthouse in Portland. I blurred out the names to protect the safety of those marshals, but, I assure you, their names are on there. They received an award for their service. They are being sued for that very service, and the Department of Justice won't represent them. They deserve answers.

The Senator from Illinois said that last night the President spoke about funding the police after the Democrats spoke for years about defunding the police. Well, I have a suggestion, How about funding these officers' legal defenses? How about that for funding the police?

Stand by the law enforcement officers who did their job and can't now get an explanation for why Merrick Garland is not standing by them.

And until that happens, I guess we can keep coming down here every week or 2 weeks because they deserve to be represented or we deserve a credible, fact-based explanation.

Now, I am just one Senator. I can't block these people forever. We can have a vote on them. We were in session yesterday for 10 hours; we didn't

have a single vote. On Monday night, we voted on late-term partial-birth abortion. If these are so important, we can have a vote on them. Or the Department of Justice could just do what it should, which is right and moral: It should represent law enforcement officers who are being sued for actions in the line of duty, or it should give an explanation for why they are not.

So I do object, and I will continue to object until that happens.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Right and moral? Is it right and moral to deny law enforcement officials—the Senator is now leaving the floor.

Is it right and moral to deny these law enforcement officials an opportunity to serve across the United States?

I listened carefully, and I was waiting for him to spell out—the Senator from Arkansas who just walked off the floor—his objection as to the qualifications of these law enforcement officers. He has none. There are none.

These men he calls political appointees, the same thing happened under the Trump administration. Over 85 of their U.S. attorneys were approved by voice vote, with no delay. One was held over for 1 week; that was it.

And yet he has made a crusade of this to try to stop these individuals from serving in the States where they are desperately needed.

The Senator from Arkansas is blocking the confirmation of these individuals and, at the same time, calling the Democrats soft on law and order. Go figure.

Don't lecture me on law and order if you are coming to the floor to prevent qualified law enforcement professionals from helping the Justice Department combat violent crime.

The reason I come to the floor and will continue to come to the floor is because we have a serious crime problem in my State and in the city of Chicago. I want to have the U.S. marshal there on the job doing everything he is supposed to do to help the local and State law enforcement bring down the violence and the death rate.

The Senator from Arkansas just doesn't seem to understand basic law. The Department of Justice has an attorney-client privilege with these individuals as they review their cases. He has been unable to get a waiver so that he can even tell us publicly what the complaint might be by the Department of Justice from the viewpoint of those Federal officials.

He can't do it. It is good enough for him, if they are under review, to stop all other U.S. attorneys and marshals across the United States.

Is this what America wants to see in Washington, this kind of obstruction? I think not. It doesn't take political courage to harm an innocent person. And what the Senator from Arkansas

has done is to harm individuals who simply want to serve America and make it safer.

My Republican colleagues frequently claim to be the party of law and order; but in this matter, they are the ones playing politics on law enforcement.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mr. DURBIN assumed the Chair.)

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Without objection, it is so ordered.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, obviously, the images coming out of Ukraine and the heroism that we are seeing is inspiring people all across America, all across the world, and it is spurring governments to action, appropriate action.

Just the other day, there was a world leader in charge of one of the world's most important countries who was spurred to action. Despite his country and his government having a leftwing leaning, he made announcements—historic, remarkable announcements—that not only stunned his country but stunned his world about the importance of a strong defense, military defense, about the importance of being realistic about energy policies. No, I am not talking about President Biden, unfortunately. I am going to get to that. He missed a huge opportunity to do just that. I am talking about the world leader German Chancellor Olaf Scholz who in the last 2 days has said Germany, because of the current crisis, is going to almost double its defense budget to achieve its 2 percent GDP portion of national defense within the next year or two—a huge, stunning announcement by the Chancellor.

A country that is addicted to Russian natural gas is now saying we are not going to have any and we are going to stop the Nord Stream 2 gas line—a huge, stunning announcement. That is global leadership.

And, unfortunately, President Biden missed the opportunity last night at the State of the Union to do exactly the same on exactly the same issues.

Let me talk about this a little bit more. I think we are starting to fully understand the implications as a nation and as a world of what is happening in Ukraine. We have entered a new era of authoritarian aggression, led by Russia's and China's dictators who are increasingly isolated and dangerous, who are driven by historical grievances, who are paranoid about their democratic neighbors and are willing to use military force and other aggressive actions to crush the citizens in countries like Ukraine and Hong Kong and Taiwan.

These dangerous dictators—Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping—are increasingly

working together to put forward and implement their vision for the world: spheres of influence that revolve around them.

If you saw and read, they joint communicated just a few weeks ago before the Beijing Olympics, Xi Jinping and Putin. It is a wake-up call to the world. It is a scary, darn document. That is what is happening.

Again, we need to wake up; this administration needs to wake up to this new era of authoritarian aggression because it is going to be with us, unfortunately, in my view, for years, if not decades.

The President had the opportunity to do what the Chancellor of Germany did in the last few days, and he didn't. My view of this situation is that we need to face it as a country with strategic resolve and confidence and recognize that our country has extraordinary advantages, particularly relative to China and Russia.

If we are wise enough to utilize and strengthen these advantages, what are they? They are our global network of allies, our lethal military, our world-class supplies of energy and other natural resources, our dynamic economy, and, most important, our democratic values and commitment to liberty.

We must always remember that Putin and Xi Jinping's biggest weaknesses and biggest vulnerabilities are that they fear their own people. They fear their own people. We need to remember that and exploit this vulnerability in the months and years ahead.

But what happened last night? Again, it was a missed opportunity because the President could have—should have—followed the lead of the Chancellor of Germany, and he didn't.

He put forward a few good ideas that, I think, drew bipartisan support in the Chamber, certainly, talking about the brave people of Ukraine. That was something that all Americans are seeing and supportive of. Also, the President's commitment to defend every inch of NATO territory, I think, is an important redline that he drew last night that, again, all of us support, but it was important for him to articulate it. Other topics—opioids, mental health, helping our veterans—count me in on those.

But what he didn't do was step up in front of the American people and, like the Chancellor of Germany, say: It is a new world, and we need to recognize it, and the Biden administration is going to make a course correction on some critical issues.

What were those critical issues? Well, they are the exact issues that the Chancellor of Germany announced to his people.

Yesterday, 23 Senators—we sent a letter to the President respectfully imploring him to address the same issues that the Chancellor of Germany just did in this new era of authoritarian aggression. We need a much stronger, robust military budget that can ensure the lethality and readiness of our

forces. If you don't believe that, you are not watching what is going on in Ukraine.

What we don't need is another Biden budget like he put forward last year that increases, by double digits, the budgets of literally every Federal Agency in the Government of the United States, with the exception of two: Homeland Security and the Department of Defense.

The Biden budget last year cut those, and I guarantee you the dictators in Beijing and the dictator in Moscow noticed. You can't do that. He didn't even mention it last night—didn't even mention it last night. And I guarantee you the dictators in Moscow and Beijing noticed and so did our European allies, which is, again, why what the Chancellor of Germany did was so extraordinary. He announced a budget doubling the budget of the German military—stunning.

But the other area that we suggested strongly to the President of the United States to address to the American people in this new era of authoritarian aggression is energy.

In our letter to the President yesterday, we respectfully called out the President and said: With respect, Mr. President, you recently told the American people in a press conference that your administration was using "every tool at our disposal to protect American families and businesses" from rising energy crisis, but that is not true. It is not true, and the whole world knows it. Heck, the administration knows it.

So we suggested 12 actions that the President of the United States could take and announce at the State of the Union that would help us with regard to energy: bring down costs, put American energy workers back to work, and not let Putin blackmail European allies of ours with energy and continue to use it as a weapon.

We asked for a course correction on the Biden administration's energy policies, which, from day 1, have focused on restricting, delaying, and, indeed, killing the production of American oil and gas.

All of this has had the predictable result, the catastrophic result of driving up energy prices at the pump and in home heating for American citizens—enormous increases, hurting working families, increasing pink slips for American energy workers like those in my State, the great State of Alaska, and again in the current crisis, significantly empowering our adversaries, especially Vladimir Putin, who has used energy as a weapon against our allies for decades.

So I am not going to go into each one of the topics or the actions that we suggested the President of the United States take, with the exception of one because it is so apparent that we need to do it and so apparent that the President should have announced it last night that I want to just briefly mention it again here.

We called on—and today in a press conference many of us called on—many Republicans and some Democratic Senators now have called on the Biden administration to undertake sanctions and an embargo against Vladimir Putin's strongest weapon, his export of natural gas and oil.

Now, many people are saying: Well, you can't do that as it relates to our European allies. What we are saying is, we understand there are challenges there. We are not talking about Europe. We are talking about the United States of America.

I want you to understand these numbers. Right now, we are buying an average of almost 700,000 barrels a day of Russian oil. By the way, that number has increased 35 percent—actually over 35 percent during President Biden's first term. At the same time, the Biden administration is going to States like mine and saying, We are going to try to shut down Alaskan oil production.

Does anyone in America, does anyone in the U.S. Senate, does anyone in the Biden administration think that that makes sense—increase imports of Russian oil to the United States while shutting down the production of American energy?

They are doing it. We all know they are doing it. Heck, they know they are doing it. It makes no sense.

In the last year, imports from the United States paid for that went back—oil imports of Russian oil, paid for in the United States going back to Russia—put \$17 billion into Putin's war chest—\$17 billion.

So a number of us—like I said, Republican and now Democratic Senators—have been saying: This is nuts. We are trying to sanction Putin. We are trying to isolate Russia from the global economy, and there is this giant loophole, and it is coming right to the United States. We are paying for hundreds of thousands of barrels a day of Russian oil going back to Putin, and they are still trying to shut down American energy production. Come on.

Of course, some of this is driven by the far left that the Biden administration listens way too much to. Come on, Mr. President, my colleagues here, this is insane, and everybody knows it. Everybody knows it.

What are we doing right now? We are subsidizing this war. We are subsidizing—by the importation of 7,000 barrels a day of Russian oil in the United States, we are subsidizing Putin's war on Ukrainians.

By the way, our friends in Canada, they just announced that they are not going to import any more Russian oil. Prime Minister Trudeau, well done, sir.

By the way, had the Keystone Pipeline not been killed by the President of the United States a little over 12 months ago, we would have up to 700,000 barrels of oil from Canada. I would much rather be getting oil from Canada than Russia right now.

If you think that this is an issue that is not impacting Ukraine, here is what

the Foreign Minister of Ukraine recently said about this topic:

We insist on a full embargo for Russian oil and gas around the world. Buying Russian oil and gas right now means paying for the murder of Ukrainian men, women and children.

That is the Foreign Minister of Ukraine. What he is asking for is something we can easily do—block any more Russian oil, Russian natural gas coming into the United States of America. People say: Well, where would we get it, then? I will tell you where we would get it. We would get it from the United States of America.

The only thing that the President mentioned last night on this topic in a glancing manner—to be honest, it was a lame glancing manner. It was almost a pathetic attempt to just barely recognize that this giant issue had to be touched upon. He said we are going to briefly release oil out of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. We are not going to produce more, which we could. We are just going to release a little more oil out of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

Here is my answer to that: Mr. President, there is a much better Strategic Petroleum Reserve than the one you referenced last night. It is called the great State of Alaska. That is America's Strategic Petroleum Reserve. And you need to let us, as your fellow Americans, help our fellow citizens and the rest of the world by producing. So it was a missed opportunity last night.

We have world leaders who, right now, the Prime Minister of Canada on the imports of Russian oil, the Chancellor of Germany on significantly recognizing the new era in which we are all in, saying: I have got to be serious about national defense and our military, and I have got to be serious about energy.

We had respectfully asked the President of the United States last night in the State of the Union to do just the same—just the same. The American people were watching, and he had an opportunity to talk about the consequences, long term, of this new era of authoritarian aggression and say: "And I am going to make some course corrections as the President of this administration because it is going to be what is good for the American people and our allies," and he didn't do it. He didn't do it, and it was a big missed opportunity for our country and for the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S.J. RES. 38

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 3, S.J. Res. 38 be discharged from the Committee on Finance and the Senate proceed to its consideration; further, that there be 3 hours for debate only, with the time equally divided between the Leaders, or their designees, on the joint resolution; and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the joint resolution be

read a third time and the Senate vote on the resolution, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 3076

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I am about to file cloture on the postal reform bill, so let me say a few words about that. So this week the Senate has kept making progress toward our goal of passing and ultimately enacting the largest bill to support the U.S. Postal Service in a long, long time.

This is a bipartisan bill, long overdue and far-reaching in how it will place our post office on secure footing for the future.

Democrats have spent the day working with Republicans on a list of amendments that they want to hold with regard to this bill, and these negotiations are ongoing.

So while we work on an agreement—and to keep the process moving—I will be filing cloture so that we can take the next steps toward the final passage.

It is my hope that we can arrive at an agreement tomorrow and finish this bill before the weekend. There is every reason in the world to do so.

At the end of the day, the vast majority of Democrats and Republicans want to see this bill sent to the President's desk quickly.

I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their continued work, especially Chairman PETERS.

This postal reform bill has been a long time coming, and when passed it will ensure that the tens of millions of Americans who rely on the post office every single day for medicine, Social Security, checks, other goods, they can be sure that the post office remains in good hands and is strengthened.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 273, H.R. 3076, a bill to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Mazie Hirono, Tina Smith, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jeff Merkley, Ron Wyden, Patty Murray, Debbie Stabenow, Jack Reed, Mark Kelly, Cory A. Booker, Robert Menendez, Jon Tester, Jon Ossoff, Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, Wednesday, March 2, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 441, 445, 458; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Claire A. Pierangelo, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Madagascar, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Union of the Comoros; Virginia E. Palmer, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Ghana; and David John Young, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Malawi?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, S. Con. Res. 14, the fiscal year 2022 congressional budget resolution, included a reserve fund in section 3003 to allow the chairman of the Committee on the Budget to revise budget aggregates and committee allocations for legislation that would not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2022 to 2031.

The Senate is considering H.R. 3076, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022,

which meets the condition of not increasing the deficit over the relevant 10-year period. As such, I am filing a revision to the aggregates and committee allocations under the budget resolution, which were last revised on February 8. Specifically, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that the bill would increase on-budget direct spending by \$430 million over 5 years but decrease it by \$73 million over 10 years.

I am also refileing two tables that I previously filed on February 8 to correct the amounts of budget authority allowable for fiscal year 2022.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables, which provide details about the adjustment, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REVISIONS TO BUDGET AGGREGATES—BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OUTLAYS

[Pursuant to Sections 4004 & 4009 of S. Con. Res. 14]
[\$ in billions]

	2022
Current Spending Aggregates:	
Budget Authority	4,145.465
Outlays	4,504.246
Adjustment:	
Budget Authority	0.612
Outlays	-3.754
Revised Aggregates:	
Budget Authority	4,146.077
Outlays	4,500.492

Note: This table makes two adjustments. It republishes the table filed on February 8 to exclude \$2.9 billion of budget authority from increased enterprise guarantee fees pursuant to section 3110 of S. Con. Res. 11 (114th Congress), the FY 2016 budget resolution. It also adjusts for the effects of H.R. 3076, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, reducing both budget authority and outlays by \$62 million.

REVISIONS TO ALLOCATION TO SENATE COMMITTEES

[Pursuant to Section 3003 of S. Con. Res. 14, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2022]
[\$ in billions]

	2022	2022–2026	2022–2031
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:			
Budget Authority	163.094	858.603	1,822.637
Outlays	162.131	867.724	1,839.039
Adjustments:			
Budget Authority	-0.062	0.430	-0.073
Outlays	-0.062	0.430	-0.073
Revised Allocation:			
Budget Authority	163.032	859.033	1,822.564
Outlays	162.069	868.154	1,838.966
Environment and Public Works:			
Budget Authority	48.743	243.930	492.473
Outlays	14.326	39.006	63.219
Adjustments:			
Budget Authority	0.674	28.580	93.681
Outlays	-7.011	-61.650	-88.619
Revised Environment & Public Works:			
Budget Authority	49.417	272.510	586.154
Outlays	7.315	-22.644	-25.400

Note: Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs adjustment includes the on-budget effects of H.R. 3076, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022. Environment and Public Works adjustment republished from February 8 to exclude \$21 billion over ten years of increased enterprise guarantee fees from budget authority pursuant to section 3110 of S. Con. Res. 11 (114th Congress), the FY 2016 budget resolution.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE SENATE

[Revisions Pursuant to Section 3003 of S. Con. Res. 14, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2022]
[\$ in billions]

	Balances
Current Balances:	
Fiscal Year 2022	-8.362
Fiscal Years 2022–2026	-75.890
Fiscal Years 2022–2031	-138.704
Revisions:	
Fiscal Year 2022	-0.062
Fiscal Years 2022–2026	0.430
Fiscal Years 2022–2031	-0.073
Revised Balances:	
Fiscal Year 2022	-8.424